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## **ABSTRACT**

### **CONFESSIONAL POLITICS AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITY IN THE EARLY JESUIT MISSIONS TO THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE**

Robert J. Clines

In its first century, the Society of Jesus undertook numerous missions to the various Christian communities of the Ottoman Empire. In each instance, the Jesuits faced obstacles to their efforts to Catholicize the Christian Orient. Through an examination of the Jesuit experience in the early modern Ottoman Empire, I argue that particular historiographical trends concerning confession-building, early modern empire-building, and globalization need to be revised. First, rather than seeing the consolidation and alliance of religious practice and political allegiance as institutionally forced through negotiation and resistance, I argue that the unique experiences of individuals demonstrate how confessionalization was not just a question of institutional control or communal solidarity, but was driven by individual desires to conform to a confessional identity, a process I call self-confessionalization. Second, this project revises the historiographical notion of the Jesuits as participants in European imperialism. I argue against the notion that the Jesuits were willful agents of European monarchs and the papacy, but rather that the Jesuits were forced to negotiate their place between Rome and the Ottoman world. They had to amend their missionary efforts based on the circumstances in which they found themselves, and this often ran contrary to the wishes of their patrons. Finally, I argue that the Jesuits in the early modern Ottoman Empire were equal participants in a global process of group identity formation that centered on the development and maintenance of borders along the lines of religious confession and larger cultural identities. They participated in this global exchange on both individual and collective

levels, demonstrating that the early stages of globalization depended upon cooperation between the major powers of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In sum, the Jesuit missions to the Ottoman world lay bare the existence of intersecting processes of religious solidification, empire-building, and global interconnectedness that are all indicative of the collaborative character of the early modern world.

CONFESSIONAL POLITICS AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITY  
IN THE EARLY JESUIT MISSIONS TO THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

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**DISSERTATION**

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History  
in the Graduate School of Syracuse University

**August 2014**



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## + **Abbreviations** +

APF	Archivio della Sacra Congregazione di Propaganda Fide
ARSI	Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu
ASR	Archivio di Stato di Roma
ASV	Archivum Secretum Vaticanum
ASVe	Archivio di Stato di Venezia
BAV	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
MHSI	<i>Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu</i>
MPO	<i>Monumenta Proximi-Orientis</i>

## + Introduction +

Although a dazzling variety of procedures and tactics are used by agents in the constitution and reconstitution of encounters, probably particularly significant are those involved in the sustaining of ontological security.

- Anthony Giddens<sup>1</sup>

On 3 March 1589, just short of his sixtieth year, the Jesuit Giovanni Battista Eliano passed away. From the moment he began his novitiate in 1550, he was a dedicated defender of the faith. In 1553, he participated in the burning of the Talmud that took place in Rome, and he prepared himself at the Roman College in theology and philosophy.<sup>2</sup> Immediately after his formal profession of vows on 1 March 1561, he became integral to the Jesuits' efforts to missionize in the Ottoman Empire. He first set off for Egypt in the summer 1561 in order to convince the Coptic Orthodox Church to unite itself to Rome. He was in Lebanon in the late 1570s to work with the Maronites, and in the 1580s returned to Egypt to pick up the work he had aborted twenty years prior. When not on mission, Eliano served as professor of Semitic languages at the Collegio Romano, an important post considering the burgeoning interest in Oriental studies throughout much of early modern Europe. Furthermore, Eliano's presence in Rome was well known, and his skills as a confessor were held in high regard. In his 1581 travelogue, *Roma Sancta*, the English Catholic Gregory Martin explained: "yea there are for Greece and al the East people, Syrians, Arabians, Aethiopians, namely father Baptista Romanus... these many yeares a Jesuite, excellent in all those tongues of the East."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 23.

<sup>2</sup> The burning took place on Rosh Hashanah, 9 September 1553. In 2011, a plaque was placed in Campo de' Fiori commemorating the burning of the Talmud. It contains two phrases: "The pages burn but the words fly" (Talmud (Avodah Zarah 18a)) and "Invoke peace for who laments your fire." Cf. Kenneth R. Stow, "The Burning of the Talmud in 1553, in Light of Sixteenth-Century Catholic Attitudes Toward the Talmud," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 34:3 (September 1972): 435-449; Kenneth R. Stow, "The Papacy and the Jews: Catholic Reformation and Beyond," *Jewish History* 6, no. 1/2 (January 1, 1992): 257-279.

<sup>3</sup> Gregory Martin, *Roma Sancta (1581)* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1969), 69.

On the surface of things, this course of events shows that Eliano fit in quite well with the rest of the early Jesuits. But Eliano's life before his decision to enter the Society of Jesus set him apart because he was born Jewish. Named after his maternal grandfather and tutor, Elijah Levita, arguably the most important Jewish scholar of Hebrew literature and Kabbalistic studies,<sup>4</sup> Eliano was born in Rome in 1530 and spent many of his early years in Venice and Germany, where his grandfather guided his study of Semitic languages. Under his grandfather's gaze, Eliano became a master of the Talmud and Hebrew Scriptures, and soon developed a strong proclivity for the Psalms and Proverbs, which he later quoted in his missionary reports with dexterous ease.<sup>5</sup> After his grandfather's death in 1549, Eliano took the very Christian name, John the Baptist, and then began his career as a Jesuit. While his Jewish past was ostensibly behind him, his experience as a Jewish convert turned Jesuit remained a major issue for him throughout his life. And it shaped how he conducted himself both as a missionary and as a professor.

Because of his status as a convert, Eliano's experience is perhaps on the extreme end of the types of individual struggles with religious identity that occurred in the early modern Mediterranean. However, that is not to say that he was alone in this struggle. When the papacy called upon the Jesuits to evangelize in the Christian Orient, Eliano's companions also grappled with finding their place in the world. And this was exacerbated when their missionary efforts ran up against a series of obstacles that redefined the nature of their efforts and how they viewed themselves. Individual desires, political intrigue, religious intractability, financial instability, differences between expectations and realities – all these tensions caused the Jesuits to rethink

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<sup>4</sup> The Augustinian friar Egidio da Viterbo (1469-1532), made a cardinal in 1517 by Pope Leo X, was a leading theologian, poet, humanist, and reformer. He was also a strong advocate of Christian Cabbalism, had met Marsilio Ficino, and openly discussed Cabbalism with Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. For more on Viterbo, Levita, and their ties in regards to Kabbalah/Cabbalah studies, see Robert J. Wilkinson, *Orientalism, Aramaic, and Kabbalah in the Catholic Reformation: The First Printing of the Syriac New Testament* (Leiden, 2007), in particular pp. 29-62.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Libois, ed., *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, Vol. 2 (Rome, 1993), 320; Cesare Ioly Zorattini, "ELIANO, Giovanni Battista," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Vol. 42 (Rome, 1960), 472-475.

and reconsider exactly what “our way of proceeding,” as Ignatius Loyola would have called it, actually was. This project’s goal is to uncover how the Jesuits’ participated in the religious and cultural dynamics of the early modern Ottoman Empire through their efforts to evangelize in the Christian Orient. This inquiry into the Jesuits’ time in the Ottoman Empire raises three larger questions: First, what role did individuals have in confession-building? Second, what implications does confessionalization have for understanding the Jesuits’ place in European expansion? Third and finally, how did early modern empire-building take place, and how did the Jesuits participate in it? By examining the Society of Jesus’s presence in the Ottoman Empire, answers will be posed to these questions.

### **Confessionalization and the early modern self**

Beginning with the work of Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling in the 1970s,<sup>6</sup> scholars of early modern Europe have used the term confessionalization to explain the consolidation of religious belief and practice in the three major confessions of early modern Christianity: Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism. Scholars have argued that this process ran parallel in all three confessions, and often resulted in the strengthening of the bonds between religious institutions and territorial states, regardless of which type of Christianity was professed. Scholars have examined how religious and political change became intertwined through church

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<sup>6</sup> Heinz Schilling, “Confessionalization in the Empire,” in Id., *Religion, Political Culture, and the Emergence of Early Modern Society: Essays in German and Dutch History* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 205-46. <sup>6</sup> Wolfgang Reinhard, “Gegenreformation als Modernisierung? Prolegomena einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 68 (1977): 226-251; Reinhard would later re-address these themes, revising and concentrating on the modernizing aspects of the Society of Jesus in “Reformation, Counter-Reformation, and the Early Modern State,” in *The Counter-Reformation: The Essential Readings*, 105-128. Before Reinhard and Schilling, the pioneer in the idea of confession-building (*konfessionsbildung*) was Ernst Walter Zeeden, who explained that the three major religious sects, Catholicism, Lutheranism and Calvinism, began to build defined confessional churches based on written confessions. As a neutral term, *konfessionsbildung* could be applied to all churches to discuss different but parallel processes of development. See Ernst Walter Zeeden, “Grundlagen und Wege der Konfessionsbildung in Deutschland im Zeitalter der Glaubenskämpfe” *Historische Zeitschrift* 185 (1958): 249-99.

and state cooperation in the construction of a tightly-knit religio-political collective identity grounded in “social disciplining” and religious orthopraxy.<sup>7</sup> And recent scholarship has nuanced the traditional view of confessionalization as the process of forced implementation of religious belief and orthopraxy from above, making room for confession-building from below.<sup>8</sup> Thus far, scholars have examined confessionalization solely as an institutionally forced or communally driven process. However, there is something missing in this paradigm, namely how it relates to the individual.

The history of the individual has been central to early modern historiography ever since Jacob Burckhardt posited that the birth of the individual, and thus modernity, can be found in the court culture of Renaissance Italy. While the debate about the individual has evolved since the publication of Burckhardt’s *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* in 1860, and most reject the notion of the Renaissance as the birth of the individual,<sup>9</sup> some scholars, such as Stephen Greenblatt, Richard Goldthwaite, and Lisa Jardine, still see the individual as having a central place in early modern culture.<sup>10</sup> While traditionally, religious life has been explored as a

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<sup>7</sup> Paolo Prodi, ed. *Disciplina dell’anima, disciplina del corpo e disciplina della società tra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino, 1994); Katharine Jackson Lualdi and Anne T. Thayer, eds., *Penitence in the Age of Reformations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), particularly Ronald Rittgers, “Private confession and religious authority in Reformation Nurnberg” (49-70), Jodi Bilicoff’s “Confession, gender, life-writing: some cases (mainly) from Spain” (169-183) and Michael Maher’s “Confession and consolation: the Society of Jesus and its promotion of the general confession,” (184-200). See also Wietse de Boer, *The Conquest of the Soul: Confession, Discipline, and Public Order in Counter-Reformation Milan* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> Marc R. Forster, *The Counter-Reformation in the Villages: Religion and Reform in the Bishopric of Speyer, 1560-1720* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); Forster, “The Elite and Popular Foundations of German Catholicism in the Age of Confessionalism: The Reichskirche,” *Central European History* 26, no. 3 (January 1, 1993): 311–325; Forster, *Catholic Revival in the Age of the Baroque: Religious Identity in Southwest Germany, 1550-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Philip Benedict, *Christ’s Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); Andrew Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>9</sup> John Jeffries Martin, *Myths of Renaissance Individualism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Hannah Chapelle Wojciehowski, *Group Identity in the Renaissance World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Richard A. Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth in Renaissance Florence; a Study of Four Families*, (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1968); Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance*

collective phenomenon,<sup>11</sup> recent literature has begun to ask more seriously how the believer experienced religious life.<sup>12</sup> And scholars have also addressed how the senses played a role in one's ability to experience and participate in religion,<sup>13</sup> and this has found its way into Jesuit historiography as well.<sup>14</sup>

However, the confessionalization paradigm and the exploration of the "Burckhardtian" individual are two distinct historiographies that have not been fully explored as interrelated phenomena. While one could say that one *was* confessionalized, in a sort of passive way because of institutional pressures, I explore instead how men like Giovanni Battista Eliano wrestled with religious and cultural forces in an active way. Thus, by exploring how desires stimulated individuals to participate in religious life, this project will call into question the notion that the culture of religion in the early modern Mediterranean was simply the result of institutional control or communal solidarity. The process of what I term self-confessionalization hinged upon the individual's concerted effort to reaffirm his or her religious identity over the life course by partaking in religious rituals, and through group prescriptions of religious conformity. Throughout this work, I will discuss the outlooks and actions of the Jesuits, other Catholic

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(New York: Nan A. Talese, 1996); William J. Connell, ed., *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

<sup>11</sup> Richard Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1980); for cross-confessional groups, cf. Gregory Hanlon, *Confession and Community in Seventeenth-Century France* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); for the dynamics of class and collective religious life in confraternities, cf. Christopher F. Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) and Nicholas Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities and Civic Religion in Renaissance Bologna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); for the Protestant area, cf. Raymond Mentzer and Andrew Spicer, eds., *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World: 1559-1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>12</sup> Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Feeling: Shaping the Religious Emotions in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>13</sup> Wietse de Boer and Christine Göttler, eds., *Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

<sup>14</sup> Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Sensuous Worship: Jesuits and the Art of the Early Catholic Reformation in Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002); Robert John Clines, "By Virtue of the Senses Ignatian Aestheticism and the Origins of Sense Application in the First Decades of the Gesù in Rome" (MA Thesis, Miami University, 2009.; John M. McManamon, *The Text and Contexts of Ignatius Loyola's Autobiography* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013).

clerics, European Catholic merchants and diplomats, Muslims, Jews, Eastern Christians, and others to explore how the actions and desires of individuals shaped the functioning and interaction of the religious cultures of the Ottoman Empire.

## **Jesuits and the Early Modern World**

The second theme this work explores is the Jesuits' role in Europe's early efforts to expand globally. A current within Jesuit historiography positions them as the "foot soldiers" of either European monarchs or the papacy. This historiographic notion of the Society of Jesus has often hinged on the Counter-Reformation as a reaction to Protestantism. Furthermore, the Jesuits have been studied as agents of control and as papal shock troops, breaking moral codes and social norms to serve the ends of a corrupt Church or absolutist monarchs.<sup>15</sup> In regards to their relationship with European monarchs, early Jesuit missions have been linked to the colonizing objectives of European monarchs. That is not to say that these investigations of Jesuits and their relationship with European expansion have not been fruitful. In fact, examinations of the Jesuits in Portuguese, Spanish, and French colonial theaters that stress the connections between the Jesuits and the colonial rulers have greatly enhanced our knowledge of how Jesuits carried forth their missionary efforts under the auspices of the European monarchies' and the papacy's global expansionist efforts.<sup>16</sup> And localized studies of the Jesuits and their missionary work demonstrate

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<sup>15</sup> Hubert Jedin, "Catholic Reformation or Counter-Reformation, in David Martin Luebke, ed., *The Counter-Reformation: The Essential Readings* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999), 21-45. In this article, Jedin explains that both terms, Catholic Reformation and Counter-Reformation, are essential because they both address different but parallel efforts of reform from within the church and against that was beyond it. In the context of the Jesuits, Jedin explains that "Papal confirmation of the Society of Jesus (1540) and calling the Council of Trent (1545) were milestones of progress." (37); Jonathan Wright, *God's Soldiers: Adventure, Politics, Intrigue, and Power: A History of the Jesuits* (New York: Doubleday, 2003).

<sup>16</sup> Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540-1750* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996); Gauvin A Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions in Asia and Latin America, 1542-1773* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Nicholas P Cushner, *Why Have You*

that the Society saw ministry as part of a larger process that was carried out from France to New Spain, Asia, and beyond.<sup>17</sup>

Recently, there have been efforts to disconnect the Jesuits from the agendas of European monarchies and the papacy in order to study their global mission on its own terms. One such study is Luke Clossey's *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (2008). Clossey claims that his is the first truly global study of the Society of Jesus. His approach sees the Society of Jesus as a transnational religious organization that facilitated the expansion of Catholicism on the global scale, and he posits that early modern Catholicism engendered a type of "Global Salvific Catholicism" that rendered it the first truly global faith.<sup>18</sup> While Clossey's examination succeeds in showing how the Jesuits worked as a transnational organization, he rejects confessionalization because of its apparent eurocentrism and emphasis on modernizing impulses, such as its impact on early modern state-building. Furthermore, Clossey downplays the importance of religious identity in the early modern period, explaining that confession "was not the sole attribute of an individual, and it was the most important only in certain situations," and that "members of all confessions could trespass confessional boundaries when the situation warranted."<sup>19</sup> Individuals like Eliano and others, however, expended so much energy expressing their religious identities, and confessional transgression was considered a major epistemological problem. Their experiences expose how important those confessional boundaries were.

Furthermore, Clossey's explanation that the Jesuits' "objective was not to distinguish their Indian "subjects" in Mexico from Calvinists in a neighbouring territory, for there were

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*Come Here?: The Jesuits and the First Evangelization of Native America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 149-170.

<sup>17</sup> A. Lynn Martin, *The Jesuit Mind: The Mentality of an Elite in Early Modern France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); Jennifer D. Selwyn, *A Paradise Inhabited by Devils: The Jesuits' Civilizing Mission in Early Modern Naples* (Aldershot; Rome: Ashgate; Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2004).

<sup>18</sup> Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.



none”<sup>20</sup> is incomplete. It limits confessionalization to just a tool for understanding the religious and social dynamics of early modern Christianity.

Rather, confessionalization should be seen as a larger series of phenomena. De-centering confessionalization from its European origins is not a new approach. In fact, scholars such as Daniel Goffman and Tijana Krstić have demonstrated how confessionalizing impulses drove the Ottomans’ efforts to ground their imperial ideology in religious orthopraxy. This enabled them to participate in an religio-imperial rivalry with the papacy and the Hapsburgs, which resulted in a type of “Euro-Ottoman symbiosis” that rendered the Ottoman Empire more like its European counterparts than has been previously acknowledged.<sup>21</sup> But I take this a step further and explore how European confessionalizations and Ottoman confessionalizations worked in tandem, or, to put it another way, globally. In this work, I ask how an examination of the situation in the Ottoman Empire can allow for a reconfiguration of the confessionalization paradigm: how can we see confessionalization as a global process in which scholars should treat Islam, Judaism, Eastern Christianity and others (as well as the various subsets of those respective faiths) as religious confessions that interacted and defined themselves against one another in the same way scholars examine post-Reformation European Christianity? In other words, can we see confessionalization as a global process that ran through and across all faiths and all early modern

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 259.

<sup>21</sup> Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), in particular his introduction, aptly titled “Ottomancentrism and the West,” pp. 1-20. The introduction also contains a map entitled “The Ottoman Empire as Part of Europe,” pp. 2-3. For more on the Ottoman participation in traditionally “European” activities, in this case, the age of exploration, see Giancarlo L. Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration: Spices, Maps and Conquest in the Sixteenth-Century Indian Ocean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011). For more on this rivalry, cf. Gülru Necipoğlu, “Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Hapsburg-Papal Rivalry,” *The Art Bulletin* 71, no. 3 (September 1989): 401–427, and Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York: Nan A. Talese, 1996), 379-424.

states, allowing for a more lucid understanding of early modern religious life and its relationship with empire-building?

It is under this concept of global confessionalization, with self-confessionalization included, that I explore the Society of Jesus as both a European and a global religious enterprise. Rather than attempting to disconnect the Jesuits from the larger patterns of global empire-building or their agency in facilitating European expansion through evangelization, I bear in mind what John O'Malley has suggested the goal should be: "to discover the origins of the Jesuits' self-understanding and to take account of the contexts into which they inserted themselves that furthered their process of self-definition."<sup>22</sup> By moving beyond the polemical view of the Jesuits as the enemies of Protestantism and heresy or as the agents of soteriological imperialism, and by remapping the Society as both a part of Catholic confessionalization and as a global religious order with its own structures, agendas, and goals, the most important goal of the early Society of Jesus emerges: *cura animarum*, the care of souls.<sup>23</sup>

While not all scholars agree with O'Malley's assessment that the Jesuits simply desired to save souls,<sup>24</sup> scholars have addressed how Jesuit political thought,<sup>25</sup> colleges,<sup>26</sup> and pastoral

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<sup>22</sup> John O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 3.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 8; 17-22.

<sup>24</sup> This is particularly apparent in the raging historiographical debate amongst historians of Jesuit art concerning its "propagandistic" elements: Gauvin A. Bailey "Le style jésuite n'existe pas": Jesuit Corporate Culture and the Visual Arts," in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540-1773*, edited by John O'Malley, S.J., Gauvin A. Bailey, Steven J. Harris, and T. Frank Kennedy, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 38-89. Bailey explains that no "Jesuit style" existed, calling it an "outdated commonplace," and that the Jesuits should be studied in "more fruitful ways." Jeffrey Chipps Smith's "The Art of Salvation in Bavaria," (also in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540-1773*, pp. 568-599) argues that "their common intellectual heritage as based in Ignatian spirituality and a humanistic educational training resulted in a similar approach," but that no systematic understanding of a Jesuit style existed. In his monograph, *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit Art in Rome* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), Bailey continued this argument by studying a wide array of Jesuit art located in Rome to demonstrate that there was no concerted effort to promote a uniform artistic style. Rather, Bailey argues for the second half of the sixteenth century as a period of transition, one in which artists were forced to meet the requirements for religious art in the wake of the Council of Trent while still attempting to meet patrons' sensibilities. However, Evonne Levy's *Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004) argues that Jesuit art is propagandistic in the modern sense of the word. Emphasizing the ornate and often overwhelming style of Jesuit art, Levy argues that it is not simply rhetorical in its power to move, but is systematic and institutional, driven by a Jesuit understanding of the role of art as a didactic, propagandistic tool.

care within European centers<sup>27</sup> were products of Ignatian spirituality that centered on saving souls. In this vein, this work explores how the efforts of the Jesuits, including their missions to the Christian Orient, reflected the deepening of personal piety and the movement toward God through action that came to be central to Ignatian spirituality. It also examines how this could be translated to the global scale without disconnecting the Society of Jesus from the larger trajectory of European religious culture, overseas expansion, and global confession-building.

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<sup>25</sup> For more on the intellectual development of an elite ruling class, from which many Jesuits came, see A. Lynn Martin, *The Jesuit Mind: The Mentality of an Elite in Early Modern France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988). Works such as Peter Godman, *The Saint as Censor: Robert Bellarmine Between Inquisition and Index* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) and Stefania Tutino, *Empire of Souls: Robert Bellarmine and the Christian Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) stress the links between political thought, censorship, and the role of the Jesuits in the development of a political consciousness in the early modern period.

<sup>26</sup> Luca Testa, *Fondazione e primo sviluppo del seminario romano (1565-1608)* (Rome: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2002) examines the same time period as Bailey's work on Jesuit art in Rome. As Bailey highlights the role of religious art as a means of instilling religious fervor, Testa emphasizes that the Jesuit seminary and the college served to produce new priests that would serve Tridentine churches, which were the new centers of catechism and preaching for the main Jesuit goal of *cura animarum*. Scholars working on Jesuit colleges in Rome and Naples respectively (Francesco C. Cesario, "The Collegium Germanicum and the Ignatian Vision of Education," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 24, no. 4 (Winter 1993): 829-841; Francesco C. Cesario, "The Jesuit Colleges in Rome under Everard Mercurian" in Thomas M. McCoog, ed. *The Mercurian Project: Forming Jesuit Culture, 1573-1580* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu; Saint Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004). 607-644; Mark Andrew Lewis, "Preachers of Sound Doctrine, Followers of the True Religion, and Learned: The Social Impact of the Jesuit College of Naples, 1552-1600" (PhD. Diss. University of Toronto, 1966) demonstrate that Jesuit colleges were not simply institutions of the Counter-Reformation. Colleges were training grounds for creating Jesuits who would care for souls; they should be seen as a part of the larger vision of Ignatian spirituality and the effort to reform society. Other works on Jesuit colleges that should be noted include Manfred Hinz and Danilo Zardin, eds., *I gesuiti e la Ratio Studiorum* (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 2004); Filippo Iappelli, ed., *Alle origini dell'Università dell'Aquila: Cultura, università, collegi gesuitici all'inizio dell'età moderna in Italia Meridionale: Atti del Convegno Internazionale ... L'Aquila, 8-11 Novembre 1995* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 2000); Maurizio Sangalli, *Università, accademie, gesuiti: Cultura e religione a Padova tra Cinque e Seicento* (Trieste: LINT, 2001).

<sup>27</sup> In *Working in the Vineyard of the Lord: Jesuit Confraternities in Early Modern Italy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), Lance Lazar examines the various groups within Italy to whom the Jesuits ministered, including the poor, prostitutes, and Jewish and Muslim converts. Two works by Thomas Lucas, *Spirit, Style, Story: Essays Honoring John W. Padberg* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2002) and *Landmarking: City, Church & Jesuit Urban Strategy* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997) examine how the Jesuits used urban space in their activities within Europe. Other works with similar goals in mind include William V. Bangert and Thomas M. McCoog, *Jerome Nadal, S.J., 1507-1580: Tracking the First Generation of Jesuits* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1992); Robert John Clines, "By Virtue of the Senses: Ignatian Aestheticism and the Origins of Sense Application in the First Decades of the Gesù in Rome" (Oxford, Ohio: Miami University, 2009); Giovanna Zanolighi, *Teatri di formazione: actio, parola e immagine nella scena gesuitica del Sei-Settecento a Milano* (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 2002).

## **Globalization, empire-building, and the Jesuits in the Ottoman Empire**

With confessionalization as a global paradigm, the third issue this project tackles is how empire-building took place and where the Jesuits fit into that global process. The first step in answering that question is gauging how the Jesuits navigated the plurality of the intersecting collective identities found in the early modern Ottoman Empire and how it influenced their preoccupation with identity that is central to self-confessionalization. First, they faced the difficult task of converting communities that had long been Christian, which was not the case in the overwhelming majority of overseas missions. These Christian communities varied greatly in their relative levels of amenability to Catholic missionaries, which created for the Jesuits no clear roadmap for how to proceed. Some were Catholic. But they were overwhelmingly Eastern or Oriental Orthodox and rarely in communion with one another. Latin Catholic populations in Istanbul and Maronite Catholics in Lebanon were much more accepting of Jesuit missionaries than those who rejected papal primacy outright, such as the Greek Orthodox. But even Catholics resisted. More recalcitrant still were the non-Chalcedonian Oriental Orthodox communities, such as the Syriac Orthodox Church (Jacobites) centered in Antioch, the Coptic Orthodox Church in Alexandria, and the Armenian Orthodox Church, whose theologies made them foreign and “heretical” to both Catholics and Greek Orthodox alike. The Jesuits attempted to navigate these differences and tried weighing them against Catholicism and against the various Christian communities that they encountered.

Second, the political situation in the Ottoman Empire also impacted the Jesuits’ efforts. Ottoman imperial authority was not always a uniform top-down system of control. As the Ottomans relied heavily on local ruling elites and were amenable to non-Muslim populations, each theater was shaped by its local cultural and political climate. Levels of amenability from the

local ruling elite varied greatly, and the relative proximity of Ottoman imperial authorities presented unique localized challenges. The influence of European powers in the Ottoman Empire also impacted how the Jesuits approached their missions. Some powers (Spain, the Holy Roman Empire, Venice before the interdict of 1606-1607, and France) heavily supported these missions. Others (Venice after the interdict, England, the Dutch Republic) actively sought to undermine Jesuit activities, just as they did in Europe. The Jewish communities were also apprehensive about the Jesuits, as they were seen as agents of a papacy that was none too kind to early modern Jewry. The Jesuits were pulled in numerous directions and were subject to many forces. The papacy, the leadership within the Society of Jesus, the Ottoman world, and Mediterranean confessional politics all compelled the Jesuits on mission to situate themselves, individually and collectively, within the confessional conventions of early modern Catholicism. This demonstrates how self-confessionalization was, like the larger processes of confession- and empire-building, a global process.

These multiple layers of interconnection and interaction pave the way for re-asking what early modern empire-building was. This project carries forth two assumptions concerning the readdressing of early-modern empire building. First, early moderns, European or otherwise, were devoid of what Charles Parker has called the “technical capacities” necessary for world domination.<sup>28</sup> Second, and consequently, the epistemological products of what developed out of that domination in later centuries, such as nationalism, capitalism, racism, and Orientalism, did not exist in the early modern era.<sup>29</sup> It is thus anachronistic to call anyone, Jesuits included, proto-

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<sup>28</sup> Charles H. Parker, *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age, 1400-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3. Cf also, Quentin Skinner, “Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas,” in *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and His Critics*, eds. James Tully and Quentin Skinner (Princeton, NJ, 1988), 29-67.

<sup>29</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1979); Michael Banton, *The Idea of Race* (London, 1977) and *Racial Consciousness* (London, 1988); Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, eds., *Race, Nation, Class:*

imperialist, or to say they were somehow reflective of a religio-cultural imperialism. This project explores instead the Jesuits' and others' abilities to participate in the development and maintenance of borders along the lines of religious confession and larger cultural, political, and linguistic identities within the Ottoman Empire, and how that was the product of early modern collaborative exchange and the polyvalence of actors participating in the construction of those identities.<sup>30</sup> The result is a view of early modern empire-building as a symbiotic process between the major world powers that vied for influence without ever achieving dominance.

What follows is an exploration of how individual Jesuits demonstrated their desire to conform and participate in expanding the borders of their collective religious identities. This study also examines how this took place in a increasingly interconnected world in which burgeoning empires vied for prominence. The cultural anthropologist Fredrik Barth has explained that "categorical ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of mobility, contact and information, but do entail social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained *despite* changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories."<sup>31</sup> Because confessionalization and empire-building centered on religious confessions and territorial states, Barth's observation suggests a dichotomization through soteriological rhetoric that stressed what was perceived to be religious truth, and what the political implications of that truth were. Because every group believed that they had found

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*Ambiguous Identities* (London, 1991); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, 2000).

<sup>30</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (July 1, 1997): 735–762. Also, cf. Niels Steensgaard, "The Seventeenth-Century Crisis and the Unity of Eurasian History," *Modern Asian Studies* 24, no. 4 (October 1, 1990): 683–697.

<sup>31</sup> Fredrik Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Boston: Little Brown, 1969), 9–10. Italics are Barth's.

the path to salvation and had divinely inspired political or cultural institutions, interacting with other groups became the point of self-reflection, self-definition, and self defense.<sup>32</sup>

To show the multiple layers at play and how they intersect, I examine the experience of the individual in the first part of the study and then weave that into the larger geo-political elements of empire-building and globalization in the second half of the work. This approach allows me to examine these two strands independently and then to build bridges between them, showing how self-confessionalization and empire-building were in dialogue with one another and were inextricably linked in the process of early modern globalization. It also makes possible the exploration of the various factors that prevented the Jesuits from being agents of salvific imperialism.

In the first three chapters, I focus on the missionary efforts of Giovanni Battista Eliano. In Chapter One, I explore Eliano's experiences with the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt from 1561 to 1563. Here, Eliano's Jewish past came into play, and he was expelled from Egypt under threats of apostasy, blasphemy, and financial default. Chapter Two examines Eliano's mission to Lebanon from 1578 to 1582. During his time there, Eliano and the Maronites faced pressures from Ottoman officials, a companion who refused to follow the directives of the mission, and a Maronite population that was poor and illiterate. Chapter Three considers Eliano's return to Egypt in 1582. Again, Eliano was imprisoned and expelled, this time because he was caught in the middle of the political and personal rivalry of the departing French consul, Paolo Mariani, and his replacement, Christopharo Vento. In these three chapters, I outline the issues that Eliano and his companions faced as a way of explaining how individual Jesuits, Eliano in particular, experienced the world of the Christian Orient and how they reacted to it in the moment.

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<sup>32</sup> Jonathan Chaves, "Inculturation Versus Evangelization: Are Contemporary Values Causing Us to Misinterpret the 16-18th Century Jesuit Missionaries?," *Sino-Western Cultural Relations Journal* 22 (January 2000): 56–60.

The remaining three chapters constitute a larger exploration of Eliano's missions and their implications for subsequent Jesuit endeavors in the early modern Ottoman world. Chapter Four recasts the decades surrounding Eliano's three missions from the perspective of his Jesuit superiors, patrons, and the pope, giving a long sketch of how Rome saw these missions in relation to its larger objectives in spreading the faith. In Chapter Five, I investigate the travelogues of Diego Salazar and Girolamo Dandini to show how Jesuits believed they could best reach an accord between Rome and the East. While these texts give the perspective of Jesuits who had been to the Christian Orient, Salazar and Dandini wrote these travelogues well after they had returned from the Ottoman Empire; they are thus reflections on how to proceed in the future rather than reactions of missions. The sixth and final chapter covers the career of Father General Mutio Vitelleschi, who led the Jesuits from 1615 to 1645. Returning to the individual experience, but this time from the perspective of someone who never went to the Ottoman Empire, this chapter shows how the same pressures from the papacy as well as the geopolitical realities of the Ottoman Empire problematized the Jesuits' efforts at home, as well as on mission, and made it decidedly difficult to lead a multi-national organization that desired to be at the fore of constructing Catholicism as a truly global faith.

This work thus examines the Society of Jesus's various encounters and experiences during its time in the Ottoman Empire, explores both the Society's and its members' roles in spreading Catholicism in the early modern world, and highlights the problems and questions that arose from the Jesuits' experiences. Because this study contends that individuals played a central role in global confessionalization, exploring the lives of men like Giovanni Battista Eliano is crucial. Thus, this work begins through Eliano's eyes.



## + Chapter One +

### Cultural Preservation on the First Mission to the Coptic Church

If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and He will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if He does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.  
Daniel 3:17-18

On 26 November 1562, a Venetian silk merchant boarded a ship in Alexandria bound for Europe. As the ship neared Cyprus, a swirling tempest tossed the vessel about. In the middle of the night, it splintered under the pressure of the ravaging seas. Reciting litanies and prayers while clinging to fragmented timbers, the silk merchant believed that only God could save him. The irony is, only days prior, as he sat in an Ottoman prison, this ship was to be his liberation. After all, he was no silk merchant.<sup>1</sup> He only dressed the part to evade his captors. He was in fact Giovanni Battista Eliano. Surely, this was not how Eliano had anticipated he would leave Egypt. When Pope Pius IV dispatched Eliano and Cristóbal Rodríguez to Egypt, Eliano was confident they would fulfill Coptic Patriarch Gabriel VII's wishes of unity and Christian peace.<sup>2</sup> While hopes were high that the Copts were ready to become Catholic, by 1563 both men were back in Italy. The mission was in shambles, and there was little hope of it recommencing any time soon. It was not until the winter of 1582-1583, which saw Eliano's return to Egypt, that the Society of Jesus again made an immediate, concerted effort to convert the Copts.

The failure of the mission and the twenty-year gap between this mission and another would suggest, on the surface of things, that this chapter is a case study in failure. Eliano and Rodríguez's efforts in Cairo and Alexandria met either cold diffidence or heated hostility. After

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<sup>1</sup> ARSI, Epp. NN 86 f. 214r/MPOII.233.

<sup>2</sup> A third Jesuit, Alfonso Bravo was sent as well, but his role in the mission was unclear, beyond being called the coadjutor of the mission. He was barely mentioned in the documentary evidence. Therefore, he is only referred to sparingly.

all, the Coptic Orthodox Church was an unlikely candidate for unity with Rome. As one of the oldest Christian communities, the Coptic Church held doctrines and theology that had developed independently for nearly 1500 years; accusations of heterodoxy or attempts to alter Coptic practices were direct attacks on Coptic collective identity. The central reason why this was such an issue was the sectarian nature of Ottoman Egypt. While they may have had some sense of the cultural dynamics, the missionaries were not fully cognizant of how the Copts viewed themselves both within Muslim Ottoman society and within the Christian Orient at large. Nearly a thousand years of Islamic rule had several consequences for the Coptic community. First, while Coptic remained the liturgical language, it ceased to be a vernacular tongue, replaced by Arabic. Secondly, the ebbs and flows of the previous millennium saw violence or discrimination against the Christian community; this, along with economic and social benefits, caused many Copts to convert to Islam. As a result, Egyptian Muslims tended to come from historically Coptic families, blurring lines between Coptic and Muslim Egyptians. Because of these fuzzy lines of cultural demarcation, confessional divisions between Copts and Muslims defined life for both groups in Ottoman Egypt.<sup>3</sup>

Likewise, the Copts were not the only Christians in Egypt. In addition to the Latin Catholic merchants in Alexandria and Cairo, there was the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of

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<sup>3</sup> Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 50. Masters suggests that “The continual erosion of the community’s numbers through conversion to Islam and the virtual disappearance of the Coptic language as a spoken vernacular had, however, erased any possibility of a Coptic “nation” centuries before the advent of Ottoman rule in Egypt.” However, the evidence, though from a Western European viewpoint, suggests a strong sense of Coptic identity in reaction to its eroding borders. While linguistic and cultural lines were blurred, the definitive characteristics of dress and religious identity were strong markers of Coptic culture, and were defining markers by which the Copts would attempt to distance themselves from the Jesuits and Muslims alike. See also Janet A. Timbie, “Coptic Christianity,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity*, edited by Ken Perry (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 98-100.

Alexandria that was in communion with the Greeks of Antioch and Constantinople.<sup>4</sup> Mutual distrust and hatred between the Copts and the Greeks dated to 451 and the Council of Chalcedon. The dyophysite consensus, made up of mostly Greeks and Latins, held that Christ had two full natures, divine and human, which were united in the person of Jesus. This was rejected outright by the Copts, causing a major schism between the two camps that has never been fully resolved. The Copts were often openly hostile to the Chalcedonian Christians, which of course included both Greeks and Roman Catholics.<sup>5</sup> Coptic antagonism was equally a negative reaction to doctrinal change as it was to the potential erasure of Coptic culture. When threatened, Coptic leaders openly resisted Rodríguez and Eliano's attempts at reform, lest the community be nothing more than a forgotten memory, the semblance of a Christian past flung aside in favor of a culture indelibly linked to a Christian identity against which Copticness had historically been defined.

The other major roadblock that Eliano and Rodríguez faced was their Jewish ancestry. The Egyptians Jews were angered and felt slighted that these two men would audaciously enter Egypt to serve the spiritual needs of gentiles. They were particularly resentful of Eliano, whose still-Jewish family lived in Egypt; his conversion was contested by a community betrayed by one of its own. The Jewish leaders, like the principal Copts, saw these two missionaries of Jewish blood as direct threats to their community. The actions the Jews took, having Eliano imprisoned on accusations of blasphemy, apostasy, and financial default, technically ended the mission. When we look at this mission in light of Coptic resistance and Jewish opposition to the Jesuits' presence, Eliano's arrest and furtive flight cap what seemed to be a two-year exercise in futility.

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<sup>4</sup> Charles A. Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans: The Church and the Ottoman Empire, 1453-1923* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 61-62.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 63-64.

Much can be gleaned, however, from futility. Despite the results, the first Coptic mission had a lasting effect on Eliano's self-construction. Unlike Rodríguez, whose family had been Christian for quite some time, Eliano was torn between his living Jewish relatives and his own Jewish past on the one hand and dedication to his new faith and the Society of Jesus on the other. Considering how he viewed himself as *both* a former Jew *and* a new Christian is pivotal for understanding how he conducted himself in the Christian Orient. While that formation, that self reflection and construction of identity, began long before Eliano ever set foot in Egypt, his experience in Cairo and Alexandria in the 1560s shaped how he viewed himself within the larger framework of the worlds between which he traversed. His desire to escape his Jewish past was contingent upon his ability to articulate a Catholic identity. In that sense, this chapter of his life was hardly an exercise in futility. Beyond tracing the events of the first Jesuit mission to Egypt, the goal of this chapter is to elucidate how the mission was an important part of how Eliano began to construct a self-portrait in which he fully abandoned his Jewish roots and was completely confessionalized into his new faith.

### **The origins of the mission**

At some point during the pontificate of Paul IV, a Coptic deacon named Abraham arrived in Rome. The *terminus post quem* of his arrival must be 2 July 1558, when one of his strongest skeptics, Diego Laínez, assumed the role of Superior General of the Society of Jesus. The *terminus ante quem* must be 18 August 1559, the death of his other major opponent, Pope Paul IV. Abraham came to Rome bearing a letter, with the seal of Patriarch Gabriel VII, that proposed that Gabriel and all the Copts would render obedience to Paul in an act of Christian charity and good faith. Numerous clerics in Rome had reservations about trusting Abraham and about

whether unity with the Copts was possible.<sup>6</sup> In a 1562 letter to Isaac, Coptic Bishop of Nicosia, Patriarch Gabriel described Abraham as “the doctor, the philosopher, Abraham, surnamed Suryani.”<sup>7</sup> However, Rome was given no such information in the late 1550s. In addition to knowing very little about Abraham, the Curia felt that the Copts were deceptive, and were perhaps looking solely for financial support considering their plight under Ottoman authority. Moreover, the dangers of missionary work within the Ottoman Empire were well known, as the numerous false starts throughout the 1540s and 1550s had demonstrated.

However, the election of Giovanni Angelo de’ Medici as Pope Pius IV on 25 December 1559 changed Rome’s stance on sending papal nuncios to Cairo. Pius oozed confidence and was papal prince *par excellence*.<sup>8</sup> He saw himself in a great line of popes, poised to return Catholicism to its preeminent position in Christendom. Under his immediate predecessors, the Catholic Church had regained much territory lost to the first waves of the Reformation. And, after years of religious warfare in the Empire, the Peace of Augsburg was signed in 1555. While on the surface of things a concession that recognized the existence and political legitimacy of Lutheranism, the Peace effectively ended the period of defensive Catholicism and allowed the papal-imperial Catholic camp to go on the offensive.<sup>9</sup> By Pius’s assumption of the papal tiara on

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<sup>6</sup> Alastair Hamilton, *The Copts and the West, 1439-1822: The European Discovery of the Egyptian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 58.

<sup>7</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 258. In his discussion of this letter, Alastair Hamilton suggests that the author is actually Abraham himself. Nevertheless, this would have no bearing on how the Jesuits would have viewed him, as it was written well after the mission’s fate had been determined.

<sup>8</sup> For more on the concept of the papal prince, especially in the period of the Counter-Reformation, see Paolo Prodi, *The Papal Prince* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); also, for the concept of the religious nature of a world empire and the idea of a princely state and mission being inextricably intertwined, see Luke Clossey’s “Faith in Empire: Religious Sources of Legitimacy for Expansionist Early-Modern States,” in *Politics and Reformations: Communities, Politics, Nations, and Empires*, edited by Christopher Ocker, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 571-587.

<sup>9</sup> This theme of the Peace of Augsburg (1555) and the implementation of *cuius regio, eius religio* as the means by which Catholic (and Protestant territories) were able to expand and consolidate their religious and political authorities is outlined in Heinz Schilling, “Confessionalization: Historical and Scholarly Perspectives of a Comparative and Interdisciplinary Paradigm,” in *Confessionalization in Europe, 1555-1700*, edited by M. Headley,

6 January 1560, the process of Catholic confessionalization was under way, and continuing the process of expanding the influence of the Church became his personal goal. Under his watch, the Council of Trent met for the first time in ten years, reconvening on 18 January 1562. Pius and leading cardinals saw the Council as a sign that the Church, militant in its reforms and aggressive in their implementation, was entering a period of resurgence.<sup>10</sup> Pius believed that he was the righteous leader of Christendom. So when it seemed that the Coptic patriarch was petitioning Rome to build a deep relationship with the pope, Pius not only saw the Copts as a Christian community in need of relief; but he also believed that only he could save their souls. It also happened that they had heretical beliefs. Pius, the spiritual leader of the whole world, saw it as his duty to assist the Copts in both this world and the next; he jumped at the opportunity to take the Catholic renewal to Egypt.

Pius believed that the Society of Jesus was the best choice for executing the mission. In a mere two decades the Society of Jesus had become the premier teaching order of the early modern Church. The first Jesuit college opened in Messina in December 1547, and Jesuits were soon educating souls from Germany and Portugal to beyond Europe. By 1551, Jesuits were opening four schools a year.<sup>11</sup> The reputation of the Jesuits as educators and spiritual leaders was so lofty, even among non-Catholics, that colleges in Germany began admitting Protestants.<sup>12</sup> While Protestant pupils were exempted from the Mass and Eucharistic adoration, nevertheless being educated by Jesuits led not a few Protestants back into the fold of the Mother Church. By 1560, the year Pius began to take Abraham's overtures seriously, the Society was well on its way

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H. J. Hillerbrand, and A. J. Papalas (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2004), 21-36. The theme of a resurgent Catholicism throughout Europe is also addressed in R. Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540-1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), specifically chapters 'The Triumphant Church' and 'The Militant Church,' 43-81.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Robert Bireley, *The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450-1700: A Reassessment of the Counter Reformation* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1999).

<sup>11</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 200.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 207.

to opening the nearly one-hundred colleges that dotted the globe, making up the largest educational network in the world.<sup>13</sup>

Father General Laínez maintained his doubts about the viability of the mission, however. Still skeptical of Coptic willingness to cooperate and still suspicious of Abraham, it took much convincing before Laínez finally agreed that the Society of Jesus should head up the mission to the Copts. Strong overtures (or perhaps coercion) from Pius certainly played a role in this, but equally influential was Laínez's relationship with Eliano. Eliano explained to his mentor and friend that this mission preoccupied him for some time and that he thought it would please God. He also firmly believed that the letter Abraham bore was indeed from Gabriel. Eliano felt that the overtures of obedience were true and that the Copts, constantly faced with dangers and the daily pressures of life in Ottoman Egypt, certainly believed that Rome could offer it solace.<sup>14</sup> On 21 May 1561, with the support of Eliano and Pius, Laínez acquiesced, and announced to the whole Society that, "with the Patriarch of Alexandria having subjected himself to obedience of the Roman Church," Pius designated members of the Society of Jesus to travel to Egypt.<sup>15</sup> Shortly thereafter, on 10 June, Pius notified the Spanish *converso* Cristóbal Rodríguez that he would be the papal nuncio to Gabriel, and that Giovanni Battista Eliano and Alfonso Bravo would be his companions.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 226.

<sup>14</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I f. 5r. "Per chè il medemo giorno che fu quel imbassator apresso Vostra Paternità ho letto le lettere el suo patriarcha, non ho mai potuto cessar di non pensar di tal missione, intendendo in Domino quanto importa, per il che mi son moss a scribe questo." The plight of the Coptic Church after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt in 1517 is discussed briefly by Bruce Masters in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World*, in particular 41-42. Masters posits that while some Christians and most Jews were "ambivalent" toward the new Ottoman rulers in relation to the previous Mamluk regime, Egypt "witnessed an outpouring of Islamic legal polemic against the Christians that led, on occasion, to mob attacks on the remaining Coptic churches and monasteries. An increasing rate of conversion further reduced the Copts to an isolated minority."

<sup>15</sup> ARSI, *Rom.* 127 f.25r./MPOII.36. "auíéndose el patriarcha de Alesandría sugetado a la obediencia de la yglesia romana, y aviendo para este effecto embiado un emaxador a este corte, y siendo menester que se embiase alguno que entendiese y pudiese dar razón acá fielmente de la dispusición de las cosas de la religión por allá, ha querido seruirse de la Compañía solamente..."

Four days later, Pius wrote to Patriarch Gabriel that he would be sending Jesuits to serve the spiritual needs of the Copts. Rodríguez came highly regarded for his deep knowledge of theology and doctrine, and Eliano was seen as essential to the mission for his familiarity with Arabic.<sup>16</sup> Pius also explained to Gabriel that he would openly welcome in Rome the brightest and most promising Coptic youths, who would be instructed in “the Latin language and the faith and rites of the Roman Church.”<sup>17</sup> Likewise, Laínez explained to Rodríguez and Eliano that the pope desired that, once the opportunity presented itself, they seek to build colleges in Egypt on the model of Jesuit colleges in Europe.<sup>18</sup> Since Pius, a hardliner when it came to Catholic reform, recognized that Jesuit colleges had been at the forefront of the success of the Counter-Reformation, he saw a Jesuit college in Egypt as an essential component to the success of the mission. He also demonstrated his strong stance regarding church reform when, in a letter to Rodríguez dated 15 June 1561, he explained that the nuncios’ primary goal was to defend the interests of the Church. Pius told the pair that there were many Egyptian apostates desiring to

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<sup>16</sup> Alastair Hamilton suggests that although Rodríguez seemed a logical choice in retrospect it was an “unfortunate” one because Rodríguez “knew no Arabic and had little experience of travel. He was above all a schoolmaster and a dogmatist—a combination which would prove ill suited to a mission of such delicacy.” Cf. Hamilton, *The Copts and the West, 1439-1822*, 58-59. It remains unclear what Bravo’s role was.

<sup>17</sup> ARSI, *Instit.* 194 f. 93v./MPOII.39. “cum quo si aliquot simul adolescents ingenii docilis et bonae ad virtutem ac pietatem indolis miseris, latinam hic linguam et Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae fidem ac ritus percepturos, optime feceris; eosque et nuncium tuum commendatos habebimus.”

<sup>18</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I f. 10v./MPOII.42. “Omnes ergo et singulas gratias quae tam privatae nostrae Societatis hominibus quam rectoribus collegiorum vel domorum praepositis, aut etiam provincialibus, ad sui muneris functionem et proximorum aedificationem concedi solent, tibi, nulla excepta, quam amplissime conferimus, in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Precamurque divinam bonitatem ut illis ad Ecclesiae alexandrinae utilitatem spiritualem uti possis.

Concedimus insuper facultatem admittendi vel erigendi unum aut plura collegia in locis quae tibi opportune in Domino videbuntur, juxta nostrarum Constitutionem rationem et prout mentem nostram ore tenus significatam intellexisti.”

For more on Jesuit colleges and educational foundations, see Paul F Grendler, *The University of Mantua, the Gonzaga & the Jesuits, 1584-1630* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Manfred Hinz and Danilo Zardin, eds., *I Gesuiti e La Ratio Studiorum* (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 2004); Filippo Iappelli, ed., *Alle origini dell’università dell’Aquila: Cultura, università, collegi gesuitici all’inizio dell’età moderna in Italia meridionale: atti del Convegno Internazionale ... L’Aquila, 8-11 Novembre 1995* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 2000); Maurizio Sangalli, *Università, accademie, gesuiti: cultura e religione a Padova tra Cinque e Seicento* (Trieste: LINT, 2001); Giovanna Zanlonghi, *Teatri di formazione: Actio, parola e immagine nella scena gesuitica sel Sei-Settecento a Milano* (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 2002).



return to the Church, and that beyond anything else the Jesuits should seek to bring them back through doctrinal reform and participation in the Sacraments.<sup>19</sup>

In his letter designating Cristóbal Rodríguez as his nuncio, Pius described the Spaniard as a “teacher of sacred theology.” Born in the Guadalajaran town of Hita in 1521, Rodríguez entered the Society in 1554 under the sponsorship of Francis Borja after having studied theology at Sigüenza. After earning his doctorate in theology at Alcalá, he proved himself to be an excellent educator and administrator. He served as professor of theology at Gandía after 1555, and then became rector in 1556. From 1557 to 1559 he was rector of the Jesuit college at Valladolid and vice-provincial of Castile. He made his final profession of faith in 1559. While he had never been to Egypt nor carried out a mission outside Europe, Rodríguez was a respected theologian.<sup>20</sup> And as a *converso* who grew up under a Spanish crown that emphasized *limpieza de sangre* (blood purity), and entered a religious order that early on was open to *conversos*, Cristóbal was cognizant of the cultural dynamics religious minorities faced in the age of confessionalization.

Rodríguez’s main companion for this mission was of course Giovanni Battista Eliano. While Rodríguez, whose family had been Catholic for generations, still faced some of the pressures of his *converso* lineage, Eliano’s experience with his Jewish past was much more

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<sup>19</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I f. 10v./MPOII.40. “ac cum quibusvis hereticis et schismaticis una cum sociis tuis versandi, reductionis eorum causa ad fidem catholicam et unitatem Eccelsiae, eorumque libros legendi, quo facilius abs te refelli possint, ipsosque heretocis resipiscentes, si herese suas etiam occulte et secreto abjuraverint atque damnaverint, et apostatas ad Ecclesiam et fidem christianam redire cupientes et humiliter hoc petentes, a quovis heresies et apostasiae crimine et poenis atque censuris in quas incurrerint, et ea quae tibi visa fuerint poenitentia injuncta, absolvendi et unitati fidelium ac participationi sacramentorum Ecclesiae restituendi, illosque ab omni infamia liberandi, et super quibuscumque irregularitatibus dispensandi, illosque ad gradus et dignitates quascumque tam ecclesiasticas quam saeculares habilitandi, plenam et liberam tibi auctoritate Apostolica, tenore praesentium, damus et concedimus potestatem, quibusvis constitutionibus et ordinationibus Apostolicis ac aliis in contrarium facientibus quibusque non obstantibus.”

<sup>20</sup> For an extended biography of Cristóbal Rodríguez, see the biographical sketch in MPOIII (Roma: Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1993), 327-328.

immediate. In addition to the fame that came with his namesake,<sup>21</sup> most of his relations remained Jewish throughout his lifetime.<sup>22</sup> As a convert, Eliano was always conscious of the skepticism that followed him wherever he went; articulating his Catholic orthodoxy would remain one of his central objectives throughout his life. Despite the ten years during which he demonstrated his fidelity to his new faith and vocation, Eliano was cognizant that his conversion would always be questioned and that he would continually face accusations of apostasy from Jews and false conversion from Christians. In this sense, Eliano was stuck between two identities: he could never fully escape his Jewish past, and he could never fully be Christian in the eyes of many. When Giovanni Battista undertook this mission to Egypt, he remained mindful that, with his own identity fluid and questionable, he continually had to expound fixed boundaries between his Jewish past and Jesuit present. Throughout, Eliano expressed a clearly delineated, assimilationist representation of himself.

### **The voyage to Egypt**

On 30 June 1561, two days prior to departing from Rome, Rodríguez and Eliano received a letter from Laínez that outlined the specific directives for the mission. First and foremost, Laínez believed that if unity with the Copts were to be achieved, it would only occur through the Patriarch's cooperation; he ordered the missionaries to show the humility and deference due to a

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<sup>21</sup> See the Introduction for the detailed discussion of Eliano's life and family legacy before 1561.

<sup>22</sup> It seems that only his older brother, Vittorio, converted to Christianity. Born in 1528, two years before Giovanni Battista, Vittorio converted some time between 1544 and 1546. It does not appear that he was "ignorant" like his mother intimated (see below). Among his many accolades, Vittorio collaborated with Francesco Zanetti on the publication of a Hebrew Bible in 1578, and, in the same year, an edition of Robert Bellarmine's *Institutiones linguae hebraicae*. See ELIANO, Vittorio, in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Vol. 42 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), 475-477.

man of Gabriel's standing.<sup>23</sup> The missionaries were also to discuss with the Copts the pious lives of Jesuits and other Catholics, ones that demonstrate "charity, integrity, modesty and other virtues... to prove the truth of our doctrine."<sup>24</sup> And they should proceed carefully when trying to see exactly what Abraham meant by obedience to Rome, lest they be accused of attempting to make the Copts' intentions seem "evil or less sincere."<sup>25</sup> The best way to do this was to respect their rites and practices, Laínez believed, and only slowly move toward implementing the Roman liturgy once they had gained the trust of the community.<sup>26</sup> Of course, in line with Pius's mandate, Laínez explained that "among dogmas, the first issue... is the primacy of Saint Peter and his successors."<sup>27</sup> The Jesuits were also commanded to report on the specific beliefs of the Copts so that it would be clear how exactly their views could be corrected in accordance with official Catholic doctrine. Laínez also believed that bridging the gap between Coptic heterodoxy and Roman orthodoxy could be augmented by sending the brightest Coptic children to Rome for education at the Collegio Romano.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> ARSI, *Institut.* 187 f. 52v./MPOII.44. "et visiteranno et salutaranno per interprete il patriarcha in nome di Sua Santità con la debita riverentia et honore, et con accomodate parole, expresse della charità di Nostra Signore et atte a conciliar ad esso nuntio l'affettione del patriarcha, offerendosi a farli ogni servitio in utilità della religione et aiuto delle anime, secondo che l'ordine di Sua Santità et l'instituto della Compagnia nostra lo ricera." A copy of this document, in Eliano's hand, is also inventoried as ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 11r-13v.

<sup>24</sup> ARSI, *Institut.* 187 f. 52r./MPOII.44. "Fra li mezzi che del suo canto potranno usare, reputino il più necessario et efficace il buon essemplio di sua vita, perciò che la charità, integrità, modestia et altre virtù haveranno piu forza di persuadere la verità di nostra dottrina, che alcuni altri argomenti, etc." This letter is also reproduced in MHSI, *Lainii Monumenta V, 1560-1561*, 576-581.

<sup>25</sup> ARSI, *Institut.* 187 f. 52r./MPOII.44. "Procurino ben intendere qual sia stata l'intentione di esso, in mandar la legatione che mandò con sua obedientia al Summo Pontifice, non mostrando haver suspitione de che sia mala o poco sincera..."

<sup>26</sup> ARSI, *Institut.* 187 f. 52v./MPOII.45. "Si ben devono dire la messa al modo romano, et per questo haver li paramenti et cose necessarie, non facciano però forza nella varietà delli riti non condannati per questa Sedia Apostolica, perché ha molti tali la Chiesa orientale, diversi della occidentale, et tutti sono buoni et usati dalli santi."

<sup>27</sup> ARSI, *Institut.* 187 f. 52v./MPOII.45. "Fra li dogmi, il primo articulo, che devono trattare et con maggior dilligenza, è del primato di Santo Pietro et delli successori suoi, et della necessita della unione con un capo a quelli che son membra del corpo mistico de Christo Nostro Signore; perché, stabilito questo fundamento, facilmente il resto si potrà edificar sopra quello nelli cuori loro." For issues of papal primacy, see Klaus Schatz, *Papal Primacy: From Its Origins to the Present* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996).

<sup>28</sup> ARSI, *Institut.* 187 f. 53r./MPOII.45. "Mandasi qui un summario delle cose credende, acciò si veda il fine al qual conviene tirar questa gente, nelle cose della fede, benché in alcune cose non sarà necessario descendere

Laínez's directives for how to handle the Copts were fairly straightforward: respect them as fellow Christians who strayed, but who were able and desirous to be reintegrated into the loving arms of the faith. Two issues in Laínez's letter, however, articulate larger concerns about missionary efforts in the Ottoman Empire and the problems of nationhood and religious confession in the early modern Mediterranean world. The first issue that arises is a political and linguistic one. In their preparations for their departure from Rome, Laínez explained that they should learn Arabic and use either Latin or Italian; the use of Spanish was vehemently discouraged, as the Ottoman officials distrusted nationals of their most hated imperial rivals. Laínez feared that the Ottomans would see the Jesuits as agents of King Philip II, bent on inciting the Christians of Egypt to rise up against Ottoman authority.<sup>29</sup> Likewise, communication with Jews was to be limited and done so cautiously. Since both men were of Jewish ancestry, it was essential that the Jews not know their identity, lest they fall under suspicion and be subjected to Jewish conspiracies. Laínez was also fearful of Rodríguez being a Spaniard, as Jewish and Moorish hatred for Spaniards (and the Portuguese as well) was well known. Many of the Jews and Moors in Ottoman cities had migrated there in the wake of expulsion from Spain and Portugal beginning in the late fifteenth century. Even though generations had passed, the Jewish and Moorish communities in Ottoman urban centers had not forgotten the treatment of their

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alli particolari con loro.....Vedanno che si mandino la volta di Roma alcuni buoni soggetti della loro natione et atti ad imparare; et quanto più nobili saranno et di più valor et authorità fra di loro, quando torneranno, tanto saranno più atti." The earliest years of the Collegio Romano and the college's seminary are the subject of Luca Testa's *Fondazione e primo sviluppo del seminario romano (1565-1608)* (Rome: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2002).

<sup>29</sup> ARSI, *Institut.* 187 f. 53r./MPOII.46. "Se potranno imparar la lingua arabiga, sarà molto conveniente, perche rari interpreti si trovano tanto fideli et intelligenti, quanto bisognarebbe. In questo mezzo usino la lingua italiana et latina, et non la spagnola, tanto essi quanto il suo compagno, perché più senza sospetto conversaranno in quel paese, essendo reputati della lingua italiana." While it mainly focuses on the context of the Celali or Jelali revolts of seventeenth-century Anatolia, Sam White, *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), nevertheless addresses the issues that the Ottomans faced in the empire concerning rebellion and imperial rivalries with the Hapsburgs to the west and Safavids to the east. See in particular "Part I: An Imperial Ecology."

ancestors, and had nothing but disdain for Spaniards and Lusitanians. Their hatred for Iberian *conversos* was even worse, as they were seen as ethno-religious transgressors.<sup>30</sup>

With Láinez's directives in hand, the Jesuits and Abraham departed from Rome on 2 July. After a short stay in Ancona, they arrived in Venice on 16 July.<sup>31</sup> In addition to procuring the tools necessary for carrying out the mission, such as books and vessels for performing their spiritual duties, the Jesuits needed Venetian permission to travel within the Ottoman Empire, as they would be arriving on a Venetian ship. At this point, relations were good between the Ottomans and the Republic of Venice. At peace since the Capitulations of 1540, Venice and the Porte had reengaged in commercial and diplomatic relations. The Jesuits received confirmation of safe conduct from the ducal notary on 23 July.<sup>32</sup> Everything was going according to plan. Travel documents in hand, Rodríguez was happy to report that they would depart for Alexandria on 10 August.<sup>33</sup> Considering the support of Venice along with the promises of Abraham that obedience would be rendered, Eliano and Rodríguez had high expectations for the mission.

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<sup>30</sup> ARSI, *Institut.* 187 f. 53r./MPOII.46. "Conversino cautamente con Greci et Giudei, et guardinsi de scoprirsi a loro et contendere con essi, etc." For more on Ottoman Jews and their relationship with Ottoman officials, see David B Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), especially 26-29, 81-85. For more on the Jewish-*Converso* legacy (Muslim-*Morisco* as well), see the various contributions in Kevin Ingram, ed., *The Conversos and Moriscos in Late Medieval Spain and Beyond* (Leiden: Brill, 2009). See also François Soyler's *The Persecution of the Jews and Muslims of Portugal: King Manuel I and the End of Religious Tolerance (1496-7)* (Leiden: Brill, 2007). For the Judeo-Spanish experience in the Ottoman world, see Annette Benaim, *Sixteenth-Century Judeo-Spanish Testimonies: An Edition of Eighty-Four Testimonies from the Sephardic Responsa in the Ottoman Empire* (Leiden: Brill, 2012). For the relationship of Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire, see Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World*, Chapter 3, pp. 68-97. While Masters covers a period beginning forty years after the current mission under investigation, he offers important insights into how European Christians, Arab Christians, Jews, and Muslims co-mingled and navigated their cultural differences.

<sup>31</sup> MHSI, *Polanci complementa*, II p. 628; ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86, f. 71rv; ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 72rv. "El Martes 15 deste llegamos aquí a Venecia Buenos, gloria al Señor. Tardamos quarto dias desde Ancona, de do escriví a Vuestra Reverencia."

<sup>32</sup> Copies of these documents, which include letters to the bailo in Constantinople and the consul in Alexandria, can be found in ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86, f. 73rv., in the hand of Cristóbal Rodríguez. Of course, this would all change starting with the War of Cyprus (1570-1573), when the loss of the island initiated a period of slow decline of Venetian influence in the eastern Mediterranean.

<sup>33</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 74rv./MPOII.58.

However, Laínez remained uneasy. After praising God for their safe arrival in Venice, Laínez reiterated that the Venetian documents securing safe conduct in the Ottoman Empire were essential and must always be carried for inspection, lest they be arrested. Furthermore, Laínez implored the nuncios not to dress like Franciscans. While Friars Minor were more widely present in the Christian Orient, Laínez felt that such disguises would only raise suspicions, not lower them.<sup>34</sup> And despite the convictions of Pius and Eliano, Laínez's fears of Abraham resurfaced. In a letter to Cristóbal Sánchez de Madrid, Superior of the Jesuit Assistancy of Italy, Laínez explained that neither he nor the bailo of Constantinople trusted Abraham, because he believed that Abraham will only deceive the Jesuits.<sup>35</sup> Laínez always felt that Abraham was secretive and duplicitous, and it is clear that his opinion had not changed. Having the bailo affirm his suspicions only made Laínez more cautious. Nevertheless, Laínez begrudgingly had to set aside his sentiments, because the other problem, as far as Laínez saw it, was Pius. During their stay in Venice, the pontiff dispatched several letters to the nuncios, one of which urged them to invite the Patriarch to send delegates to the Council of Trent and again reminded them that the central objective of the mission was acquiring Coptic recognition of papal primacy.<sup>36</sup>

The biggest obstacle at this point, before the issue of papal primacy could even be addressed, was actually leaving Venice. 10 August came and went, as did Rodríguez's hopes of

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<sup>34</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 86 f. 43r./MPOII.60. "Il pigliar habito del ordine de Santo Francesco, non pare conveniente, perché bisognerà dopoi levarselo, quando starano là, et pur il pericolo più presto sta di là che nel viaggio."

<sup>35</sup> MHSI, *Epistolae Lainii*, VI, 1561-1563, 12. "Nostro Padre non crede al servitore del ambassador del patriarcha, anzi lo tiene per bugiardo; et vero l'ambasciador et il cardinale alexandrino mi disse (si ben mi ricordo) che il bailo di veneciani, quale la prima volta disse non esser costui mandato per il patriarcha, che si."

<sup>36</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 86 f. 77r./MPOII.66. "Itaque opportunum nunc tempus esse duximus, veneerabilem quoque fratrem nostrum Patriarcham Alexandrinum, nationis Cophtorum, ad quem te nuntium nostrum misimus, de indicto concilio certiore facere et hortari ut mittat unum pluresve, prout ei placuerit, ipsius nomen concilio interfuturos."

leaving on 15 August.<sup>37</sup> By the end of the month, Rodríguez and Eliano were growing weary, and hoped to leave on the first ship bound for Cyprus, whence they could easily get to Alexandria.<sup>38</sup> They were deeply worried that if they did not leave by mid-October, they would be stuck in Venice throughout the winter. However, instead of idly waiting, they exercised all the ministries of the Society throughout the city, namely preaching, saying Mass, and hearing confession. Venice also provided the perfect backdrop for Eliano to articulate how he had come to separate himself from his past and integrate himself into the Catholic fold. As Venice had been his boyhood home, and was where he had converted to Christianity, Eliano was well aware of the polyvalent character of Venetian society. When Eliano reported that the city was full of Lutherans and “Jews, Moors, Greeks, and men of almost every nation,” all of whom were in need of spiritual guidance, he was doing more than exposing the various communities within Venice; he was also outlining specific parameters by which one’s nationhood could be defined.<sup>39</sup> By classifying these groups as not Venetian (and subsequently not Catholic) and in need of spiritual guidance that *he* could provide, he was offering unspecified means by which his identity could be signified.

In this seemingly simple and innocuous expression of a plurality of others in Venice, Eliano constructed his identity against a sundry of ethnic groups. Moreover, grouping them by the use of the word *nation*, Eliano employed the common, if not invariable, term used throughout

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<sup>37</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 76r./MPOII.64 “Di giorno aspettiamo che la nostra nave si parti, il che sara al più longo verso la festa della Madonna d’Agosto; noi stiamo sani et preparati.”

<sup>38</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 81r./MPOII.73. “Noi speriamo ogni giorno per partirci, ma non so quando sarà, perché ha mancato più volte il patrone de quel che ha dito, e già ha dito che partiremo senza dubio mercordi; volla Dio quel sia, che certo ogni dì se me pare un anno. Sono tre altre nave che vano a Chipro; sì questa nostra non se spedisce, anadremo con la prima di queste.”

<sup>39</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 82r./MPOII.74-75. “qui sono Lutherani assai, come dicono molti fide digni, Judei, Mori, Greci et huomini quasi d’ogni natione molto necessitati, tanti traffagi di mercanti intrigati, et altri più importanti che a bocca dirà il Padre Emanuel.” These definitions, while not political, were outlined juridically, at least in Venice. See in particular Giorgio Fedalto, *Ricerche storiche sulla posizione giuridica ed ecclesiastica dei greci a Venezia nei secoli XV e XVI* (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1967).

the early modern Mediterranean. The word *nation* appears in a goodly number of writings, of many genres, in all its linguistic manifestations.<sup>40</sup> By nation, Eliano referred to an elastic community that had imagined but finite boundaries shared with other nations that possessed similar self-created parameters of national identity.<sup>41</sup> While boundaries were not necessarily delineated politically in Venice (the member of a particular nation living in Venice was not necessarily a Venetian subject), nonetheless there were imagined distinctions between groups that were both impenetrable and permeable. Likewise, the Venetian community of merchants and their families living in Constantinople would have been part of the Venetian nation. While the numerous nations within Constantinople and Venice often had their own laws and jurisdictions, they were located within the geographical confines of the Ottoman Empire or the Serene Republic, respectively. In this sense, it was often difficult to tell who was a subject of whom.<sup>42</sup> Identity and nationhood were both a process and a continuum in which binaries did not hold up.

Eliano's reflections continued as the missionary quartet lingered in the city of St. Mark throughout September. Early on, the Jesuits' spirits remained high, but it became a trying month. They hoped to secure amicable relations with the French and Genoese consuls once in

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<sup>40</sup> Some exceptions notwithstanding, the word nation, regardless of language, was the most prevalent way to discuss one's larger cultural group identity. The four most dominant languages concerning travel and identity in the early modern Mediterranean, deriving from the Latin (*natio*), are Italian (*nazione/nazione*), Spanish (*nación*), Portuguese (*nação*), and French (*nation*). They all articulate this cross-linguistic and cross-cultural perception of the nation as a fixed collective identity. Eric Dursteler describes this as an "unofficial nation" in the eponymous chapter "The Unofficial Nation: *Banditi, Schiavi, Greci*" in his Eric Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 61-102.

<sup>41</sup> This is not the same thing as the modern nation state that Benedict Anderson would emphasize centuries later in *Imagined Communities*. Yet, Anderson's explication of an "imagined community" is useful for getting at what Eliano is attempting to construct. Anderson explains: "the nation is imagined as *limited* because even the largest of them... has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations." See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1991), p. 7.

<sup>42</sup> Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, 23-40.



Alexandria, and Eliano and his companions anxiously awaited departure.<sup>43</sup> With nothing but deep faith in their abilities, Rodríguez and Eliano were confident they would establish a permanent Jesuit residence in Egypt guided by the same “rules and constitutions of the Society” that had borne so much success in Europe.<sup>44</sup> However true this may be, this statement about rules and regulations is more than just a clear assertion of their adherence to the original objectives of the Society of Jesus as laid out by Ignatius himself; it is also a joint declaration by two *conversos*. Given the background of the two, both men had significant reasons for reaffirming their devotion; and the immediacy of Eliano’s Judaism placed a higher burden on him. At the time Eliano was affirming his Catholic identity, he was also actively hiding his Jewish past, as fears arose that the Jews of Venice would discover his identity and concoct a plot against him. Should he be exposed, the mission would be jeopardized and Eliano himself would be in grave personal danger. Eliano certainly was not willing to do anything to endanger the mission, and seemed to have legitimate fears of the Jewish community; it also appears that Rodríguez was savvy in recognizing that it would be nearly impossible to protect Eliano should the truth be known, and thus kept Eliano safe by preventing him from circulating freely around Venice.<sup>45</sup>

Rodríguez and Eliano reported on 6 September that, although Venice and the Turks were at peace, tensions were mounting. While there were no open hostilities, rumors swirled that the Venetian Senate was cautious about dispatching a flotilla for fear that the Turks would enslave

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<sup>43</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f.83v./MPOII.77. “In Alexandria è il consolo del Re di Francia, et di Genoa; se par alla Vostra Paternità, sara bene che il Re al suo, et Genovesi al suo, scrivino alcune lettere di raccomandatione per noi.”

<sup>44</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f.83r./MPOII.76. “Andiamo tutti con la medesima volontà et desiderio di travagliar per Christo.... et noi facciamo quello che dovemo, et col aiuto di Dio (come si potrà) osservaremo le regule et constitutioni della Compagnia, facendo speso esortationi per più profitarci, poi che questa pelegrinatione è nostro collegio, fin che Dio, per sua bontà, si degni darci un luoco firmo in Alcayro, et sequentemente in quelle parti molte altre case et collegi.” The directives for Jesuit residences were originally outlined in the *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970).

<sup>45</sup> Hamilton, *The Copts and the West, 1439-1822*, 59.

any non-Venetians aboard, as they were not protected by the agreements of the Capitulations of 1540.<sup>46</sup> They labored in Venice a few more weeks, only able to board a ship on 20 September. Rodríguez and Bravo found their shipboard lodgings, but Eliano remained sequestered because of his fears of the Jews. As they moved their belongings aboard, hoping to leave by the end of the week, departure was again delayed, this time by a torrential storm that blocked all ships from leaving the lagoon.<sup>47</sup> On 24 September, they received word that departure was finally imminent, perhaps by the end of the month. Their faith in divine favor was renewed again, and they believed that Coptic-Catholic unity was only a boat ride away.

However, a few precautionary words from Rodríguez exposed some uneasiness about the tumultuous political climate of Ottoman Egypt. He informed Laínez that accompanying his previous letter from the 13 September was a crib sheet, *ad cautelam* (for precaution), containing codes for various terms, lest suspicious eyes uncover the more sensitive details of the mission.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 85rv./MPOII.78-79 “Ogni giorno dicono che ci partiremo, et mai ariva quel giorno; adesso si ha scritto alla Signoria dalli suoi guardie di mar, che l’armata del Turco ciò è 50 vele ha stata questi giorni in la Volona, porto del Turco, circa 600 millia di qui per la strada della nostra nave. Et anchor che li Venetiani siano confederati del Turco, sempre quasi che si incontrano, fanno di lor quello che li pare, al meno (come si dice) pigliono quelli con le lor facultà che non sono Venetiani.” The fear of enslavement of Christians at the hands of Turkish and Barbary corsairs was quite high by the late sixteenth century, as the Venetian fleet was not nearly what it had been 100 years prior. Moreover, this time period (especially after the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, though this is debated as well) saw the decline of the Turkish fleet and the rise of piracy and Christian slavery. For more on Christian slavery, see Robert Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500-1800* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) *Holy War and Human Bondage: Tales of Christian-Muslim Slavery in the Early-Modern Mediterranean* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Praeger/ABC-CLIO, 2009). For investigations of the relative decline of the Ottoman navy (and Mediterranean navies and galley warfare in general) after Lepanto, see John F. Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleys: Changing Technology and Mediterranean Warfare at Sea in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974) and “Ideology and Conflict: The Wars of the Ottoman Empire, 1453-1606,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 4 (Spring 1988): 721-747.

<sup>47</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN. 86 f. 86rv./MPOII.80 “Ogni di stiamo per partir, et sono cinque giorni che il Fratel Alfonso et io siamo imbarcati con la robba nostra et del imbassator per pigliar buon loco nel nave; et perché la nave non si era per partir súbito, mi son ritornato, per tornar poi col Padre Baptista, il qual sempre sta in casa aciò che stia più occulto deli Judei.”

<sup>48</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 87r-88v./MPOII.82. “A tredice del presente mandai a Vostra Paternità ensiemi con mi lettera una cifra che usarò quando bisognerà, et *ad cautelam* per si è presa, restarà qui altra al Padre Cesare, e in quella mancano doi vocaboli necessari, cioè Alexandria – Perusa, il Cayro – Bologna. Vostra Paternità farà che se scrivano ne la cifra che ho mandato.” While the letter from 13 September from Rodríguez to Laínez is now lost, the code itself has somehow survived and is inventoried as ARSI, *Fondo Gesuitico* 678/21/4. It contains code names for

Compounded with fears of having Eliano exposed as a former Jew and Rodríguez as a *converso*, using code allowed the Jesuits to communicate openly with Laínez and Pius while ensuring that the missionaries were never in peril. The inclusion of the Latin expression *ad cautelam* encapsulates the outlook of Eliano and Rodríguez: while they may have firmly believed that they were performing God's will and that the mission had divine favor, they nevertheless were well aware that even the slightest misstep or leak of information could have negative consequences. They fully embraced their duty as papal nuncios, but still shared some of the sentiments Laínez held about the prospects for the mission.

On 26 September, the Jesuits and their Coptic envoy finally boarded the ship for departure, which took place on 1 October.<sup>49</sup> It did not take long to recognize that the ship was a veritable floating Venice, full of Jews, Greeks, renegades, and Turks. The Catholics on board, mostly Italians, spent their time playing games or in general idleness, which perturbed the Jesuits. However, there were a few who sought out the service of the missionaries, as they heard confession from many on board, especially those who had not confessed in some time.<sup>50</sup> Eliano explained that he heard confession in a number of languages, ranging from Arabic to German,

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the missionaries, geographic locations, Ottoman and European officials in Egypt, Greeks, Jews, and even doctrinal matters like the Sacraments, Purgatory, the Filioque clause of the Creed, and the observation of the Sabbath. See also, MPOII.47-49 for a published version of the code.

<sup>49</sup> Rodríguez explains on 30 September that they would leave the following day: ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 90rv./MPOII.85. "O Dio, che questa sia la ultima che scrivo da qui, perché dicono che questa notte si partiremo o dimane." The departure of the ship from Venice on 1 October 1561 was verified in two letters. On 4 October, Cesere Helmi, Rector of the Jesuit college in Venice wrote to the Vicar General of the Society, Alfonso Salmerón, that "Le nave delli nostri che vanno in Alessandria partirno mercordi di porto." See ARSI, *Ital.* 119 f. 136rv./MPOII.85. On 9 October, writing from Ragusa, Rodríguez wrote to Laínez that "Siamo partiti da Venetia mercordi primo dil presente." See ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 93r./MPOII.87.

<sup>50</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 93r./MPOII.87. "Vano in questa nave molti homini, Judei, Greci, renegati et algun Turco... A li Christiani italiani procuramo de persuadir, ma sono molti tan indispositi, che più presto se occupano in giogo et in altre cose de niente che de attendere cosa bona, et cusi no li parliamo. Ma fra questi sono alcuni che mostrano aiutarsi con alcune persuasione particolare che li facemo, et più si fa con li marinai et altri simili, insegnandoli la doctrina christiana quando hano loco, et persuadendoli il visogno aciò che observandolo si salveno. Et molti sono persuasi a confesarsi; fra li quali sono molti che da molti anni non sono confessati."

showing both Eliano's linguistic dexterity and the assortment of nations represented aboard.<sup>51</sup> They took great solace in these religious exercises that were ancillary to the mission, such as the conversion of a Lutheran, and nothing brought them more peace than having time to preach on board. Rodríguez described how he and Eliano preached every day "for the Church, the Supreme Pontiff, the council, the cardinals and prelates and the clergy, the religious, the Society, the reduction of heretics, infidels, schismatics, and for our mission, and for other things for which we are obliged."<sup>52</sup> Eliano also used the time on board to brush up on his Arabic, most likely with the help of Abraham.<sup>53</sup> Despite being the principal of the mission, Rodríguez did not speak Arabic. This left Eliano with the overwhelming responsibility of communicating with locals in Egypt and ensuring that all documents were translated efficiently, not to mention correctly. Being thrust into such a position of authority surely put the junior Eliano in a precarious position;

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<sup>51</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f.212r./MPOII.97. "Sono anco stati alcuni Luterani nela nave, fra li quali uno per esser ridotto, in tanto che dopo haver cognosciuto il suo error et permettendo li fosse strazzato un libro heretico, dimandò li fosse imprestato un libro spirituale acìò un poco spirito.

Io ancora che in tutto son negligentissimo, non dimeno mai han agiutate quille lingue che so, in agiutar alcuni essendo che, dopo che mi parti da Roma, ho et parlato et anco confessato in arabico, Tedesco, italiano, latino, spagnolo."

<sup>52</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 93r./MPOII.87. "Habemo asai tempo per la oratione, il quale, con la gratia di Idio, procuraremo de no perdere, poi no sapemo quanto ci durarà, principalmente essendo tanto necessità de orationi; et ansi procuramo di far orationi spese volte ogni jorno per la Chiesa, Sumo Pontefice, concilio, cardinali et prelati et clero, religioni, la Compagnia, la reductione de li heretici, infideli, schismatici et per nostra missione, et per le altre cose che siamo obligati, demandando il medesimo ogni giorno con la letania et misa secca."

<sup>53</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 93r. "Procurò quel P. Baptista se exercite in amparar legere et scribere la lingua aravica per bisognar molto per il nostro fato." Alastair Hamilton argues that Eliano's Arabic was negligible and that he did not know about Guillaume Postel's famous Arabic grammar published in Paris in 1538. Postel's grammar was the standard tool for learning Arabic. However, while not mentioned directly by Eliano or Rodríguez, I believe that Eliano would have known about Postel's grammar, used it to learn Arabic, and may have had it on board with him. Robert Wilkinson points out that at some point in 1537, the year before the publication of the grammar, Postel and Elijah Levita, Eliano's grandfather, were in Venice at the same time and met each other through a mutual acquaintance, the Flemish printer of Hebrew books, Daniel Bomberg. Bomberg printed Levita's *Massoreth ha-Massoreth* in Venice in the same year that Postel's grammar was published Paris. It is not inconceivable that Levita, Postel, and Bomberg discussed at length the Arabic grammar or that Levita (and subsequently Eliano) had a copy later in life. Moreover, as Egidio da Viterbo was well versed in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic, it should follow that his most famous client and tutor, Levita, had more than a basic knowledge of the language, which he would have passed on to his grandson. See Hamilton, *The Copts and the West, 1439-1822*, 60; Robert J. Wilkinson, *Orientalism, Aramaic, and Kabbalah in the Catholic Reformation: The First Printing of the Syriac New Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 22, 48-54.

he was propelled to the fore of the mission while still fretting about keeping his Jewish past under wraps.

The next stop on the voyage, on 14 October, was the Venetian island colony of Zakynthos, off the coast of the Greek Morea. They should have already been in Alexandria, or so Rodríguez believed; but they encountered more storms in the Adriatic and made frequent stops.<sup>54</sup> While agitated by the delay, the Jesuits were pleased to report that Abraham remained optimistic, and they were pleased to work with him.<sup>55</sup> While on Zakynthos, they encountered a group of Ethiopians. Eliano and Rodríguez were bewildered. Their rites and practices seemed most odd, and their blasphemies against the papacy distressed the Jesuits. One Ethiopian in particular was adamant about his beliefs, and even told Rodríguez that he was an evil man. Rodríguez and Eliano were shocked by the insolence with which this Ethiopian spoke against them. Despite the Jesuits' efforts, which were either warmly received or coldly ignored on the ship, the Ethiopians at Zakynthos were openly hostile to the men who seemed like depraved heathens intent on corrupting them with a false form of Christianity.<sup>56</sup>

This disorienting experience forced the Jesuits to recognize that within weeks they would be immersed in a land with potentially equally hostile Christians. This is suggested by Rodríguez's decision to garner more support from European powers in Alexandria. He wrote to

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<sup>54</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 94r./MPOII.89. "Ci ha concesso Iddio tanto buon tempo che se la nave non si firmasse in tanti luochi, quasi sariamo già in Alexandria... Et per la bontà di Dio, poco dopoi doi volte ha cessata la tempestà, et anco per orationi deli Nostri, che son certo che non mancano."

<sup>55</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 94v/MPOII.90. "Il imbasciator sta ben, et noi procuramo di contentarlo in tutto quello che si può."

<sup>56</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 94r-94v./MPOII.89-90. "Vanno qui alcuni Ethiopi. Ho paura non sia con desiderio di moltiplicarsi in queste bande, et chiaramente si monstrano esser tali, in tanto che uno di lor diceva pubblicamente esser mal l'invocatione deli santi, vedendo dir le letanie che li giorni di sabbato qui si fanno; et anco diceva mille blasfemie a M. Pietro, in tanto che io avanti gli altri che lo diceva, gli die ad intender come era error infernal dir quello, di modo che, per la gratia di Dio, gli altri restarno satisfatti et lui confuso in questo; et anco perché li straciai un libro che havea dela sua professione, il qual lui laudava molto; et dicendo io che era malo, voles si trovassi in quello alcun error, et si straciassi, et havendolo monstrato chiaro lo straciai, essendo però prima persuaso dal Padre Baptista et da me in particular spesse volte."

Rome imploring Laínez to procure the assistance of the Ragusan and French consuls in Alexandria. There seem to be two motives in this regard. First, the Jesuits sought to fulfill the spiritual needs of the Latin Catholics in Egypt, and having the support of national consuls would secure this. More importantly, the Jesuits believed that, despite the help they had received from Venice, the French consul had more sway with the Ottoman governor of the Egypt, and had a better relationship with the Copts.<sup>57</sup> Once this was procured, the Jesuits would have the assistance of the Venetians, Ragusans, Genoese, and French, quite the slew of allies. And they were going to need all the help they could get. As they sailed from Zakynthos, they were soon to discover that the Egypt they found was stickier than they had expected, with a far more stifling social climate than a Venetian colony with a few Ethiopians. And for Eliano, his experiences in Egypt would impact him in significant ways, as he would be forced to preserve himself and the mission while immersing himself in the tortuous cultural dynamics of Ottoman Egypt.

### **The Jesuit experience in Cairo**

The missionaries finally landed in Alexandria on 4 November. The following day, while Rodríguez handled the nuts and bolts of securing protection from European diplomats, Eliano set off for Cairo. He blended in with a group of Christian merchants due to what he called *propter metum Judeorum*, on account of dread of the Jews.<sup>58</sup> Five days later, the Venetian Consul,

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<sup>57</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 94v/MPOII.90. "...possiamo esercitar il nostro ministerio fra quelli suoi della sua natione. Per il medesimo in altre ho scritto che se pareva a Vostra Paternità si ci procurasse alcuna lettera in nostra ricomandatione per il consol di Francia, per che quell ache haveamo era per il consol passato, et dicono che importarà molto, perché è di più authorità apresso il bassà che quello di Venetia."

<sup>58</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 210r./MPOII.92. "il giorno sequenta che arivassimo in Alexandria che fu alli 4 di novembre, parendo cusi al padre, mi partì di là con buona compagnia di mercanti christiani per Cairo, et questo per conto che facilmente sarei stato cognosciuto dalli Judei che "circuunt querentes quem devorent," restando il primo in Alexandria, per che ancora non havea cavato le robbe fuor de la nave, et perché era buona occasione di sicurtà per haver con noi gente del viceré di Alexandria in guardia de le vie mal sicure." The Latin expression, *propter metum*

Lunardo Emo, happily welcomed Eliano. Upon entering Emo's home, Eliano said Mass and was warmly greeted by the Latin Christians associated with the Venetian diplomat.<sup>59</sup> After spending some time in Emo's company, Eliano set out to meet Patriarch Gabriel for the first time. The patriarch had already received news of their arrival in Alexandria and eagerly awaited their appearance before him. In their first meeting, Eliano and Gabriel did not discuss matters of faith or papal primacy, but rather focused on greetings and supplications. They discussed how happy the Jesuits were to be in Egypt, and Gabriel was pleased to hear that Abraham had had such a positive experience in Rome.<sup>60</sup> Eliano's reaction to this meeting was somewhat mixed. Despite the warm welcomes from Emo and from Gabriel, he believed that "in the beginning it will be difficult," and he asked Laínez to pray for the mission in order that it be successful.<sup>61</sup> Beyond struggles with the Copts, it was immediately clear that his fear of the Jews was not unfounded: within days of arriving, Eliano had a run-in with a number of Jews who were suspect of the foreigner. Describing himself as "one who was Jewish and now is Christian," he was deeply fearful that his Jewish past would be exposed, especially since he had family in the city who were unhappy with his decision to convert. And it turned out that his relatives got wind of his presence shortly after his arrival.<sup>62</sup> One family member would be particularly difficult to face:

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*Judeorum*, appears in Eliano's autobiography. See ARSI, *Hist. Soc.* 176 f. 119-145. This expression is found on f. 131.

<sup>59</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 210r./MPOIL.92. "il dì sequente confessandomi col' capelan del' consol', dissi messa alli Christiani in casa et in presentia del' detto consol', il qual' voles che io disnasse con lui."

<sup>60</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 210v./MPOIL.92. "Il medesimo giorno, havendo già per avanti inteso il Reverendissimo patriarcha di Cophti che'l suo imbassator era già arivato in Alexandria, et che venan con lui duoi mandati da Sua Santità... si abocasse meco in sua presentia, non già trattando cose de la religione, per non haver tal comissione, ma solo in dechiararli qualche cosa de le cose romane et de la buona compagnia che Sua Santità ha fatto al suo imbasciator, etc., il che farò credo dimane."

<sup>61</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 210v./MPOIL.93. "Vero è che sarà un poco di difficoltà nel principio; ma chi potrà contra Dio Signor nostro, et de la sua santa Chiesa et de li suoi fideli ministri. Prego adonche, come credo non manca Vostra Paternità di far caldamente oratione per questa tanto importante missione."

<sup>62</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 211r./MPOIL.94. "Essendo uno che è stato hebreo et hora è christiano, che mi cognosceva senza che io lo cognoscesse a lui, che habita fra li Christiani da Christiano, il consol', sta mattina a buon

his mother. He had no desire to see her, and intimated that he was unaware she was even alive.<sup>63</sup> They had not spoken in thirteen years, and their shared antipathy caused Eliano great stress. He never explained why, but in spite of the possible threat to his life, and despite the mutual animosity, he agreed to meet her.<sup>64</sup>

The meeting was anything but the rekindling of the faint embers of a mother-son relationship. Eliano wrote that his mother's sole objective in meeting was to convince him to stay in Cairo and renege on his Christian beliefs. His mother tried to sway him from his error, telling him that she understood why his brother, Vittorio, converted to Christianity; he was ignorant and lacked judgment. But she was baffled when it came to Giovanni Battista. After his great education and all the years of tutelage under his grandfather, she just could not fathom how he could let himself be deceived. He told her that he had found the truth, and that it was she and the rest of the Jews who were mired in ignorance. He then left his mother, who still hoped she would have opportunities to speak with him and convince him to end his apostasy. However, Eliano never saw her again, nor did he try to seek her out.<sup>65</sup>

Shortly after Eliano's encounter with his mother, Rodríguez joined him in Cairo. They, along with Consul Emo, spent the remainder of November engaging with the Copts over matters of papal primacy. In their first official report to Pius, written in early December, Eliano and

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hora, aciò non mi palezazze, lo ha fatto chiamar, dimandandoli se mi cognosceva; et dando segno di se, ancora io non solo lo ho cognosciuto, ma ~e mio parente, il qual havea qui parlato alla mia madre..."

<sup>63</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 86 f. 211r./MPOII.94. "Quanto alla mia madre, né io tengo voglia di parlarli, né manco lei tiene desiderio di vedermi, secondo ché mi è stato ditto, che lei diceva che non haria voluto che io venesse qua, parendoli opprobrio del suo honor in haver un tal christiano, et cusi stiamo di cordo, "sed veh dicentibus bonum malum et malum bonum."

<sup>64</sup> ARSI, *Hist. Soc.* 176 f. 131.

<sup>65</sup> ARSI, *Hist. Soc.* 176 f. 139./MPOII.125. "Et havendone havuto nuova la mia madre che ancora era viva, la quale non mi haveva veduto né havuto nuova alcuna di me in xiiij anni, fece grandissima istanza di volermi parlare, sperando che con la sua vista et parole mi haveria fatto restar' in Cairo, per ritornare al vomito." This expression is an allusion to 2 Peter 2:22, which reads: "The proverb is true that describes what has happened to them: 'A dog returns to its vomit,' and 'A pig that is washed goes back to wallow in the mud.'"



Rodríguez explained that Gabriel was receptive to the idea of communion with Rome.<sup>66</sup> But Pius was made aware of Gabriel's reluctance in sending Copts to the Council of Trent. While Gabriel warmly welcomed the Jesuits into the Coptic community as fellow Christians, he feared the sectarian tensions between the Coptic community and the Muslim authorities; he felt the Turks could see this as an unholy alliance eventually leading to civil unrest, a threat that was taken seriously in a province as religiously stratified as Ottoman Egypt. But they happily reported that, despite the hesitation, a Coptic delegation would be on its way to the alpine city some time after Easter 1562.<sup>67</sup> Gabriel's fears of Turks, however, could not be overcome when it came to sending Coptic youths to Rome. While Gabriel may have been willing to sacrifice a bishop or prelate, Gabriel refused to do the same with children.<sup>68</sup> Despite Gabriel's recalcitrance and the apparent dangers they faced, the nuncios were more than pleased with what they had to report in their preliminary meetings, and remained optimistic on the whole.

Aside from the warm greeting and promises received from Gabriel, Eliano and Rodríguez had other reasons to be optimistic. They felt welcomed by the Coptic community, and were going to use the warm reception to observe their rites and customs in order to produce a plan for

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<sup>66</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 104r./MPOII.108-109. "Gli ho dato ad intender la gran charità et cura che ha Vostra Santità verso di lui et del suo clero et de tutti li Cophti, et che in segno di quella mi manda, acìò che, fermandomi apresso lui, sempre li servesse, procurando insieme la lor unione con la Chiesa catholica romana, che tanto è necessaria per la lor salvatione; lui ha risposto che molto ringratiava Vostra Santità per la gran cura che ha di loro, come vero pastor et padre, et in haverli mandato il suo nuntio, il che non ha fatto a molti altri prelati di queste bande, ancor che li habbian scritto, et ha mostrato volontà di far il debito suo nel' obedientia a Vostra Santità, come tante volte ha scritto."

<sup>67</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 104r./MPOII.109. "gl'ho dato l'altro breve di Vostra Santità, nel qual l'exorta che mandi alcuna over alcune persone in suo luoco al Santo Concilio; lui mi ha promesso, in presentia del consul di Venezia, che subito dopo la Pascha de Resurrectione mandaria un vescovo deli suoi, col istesso imbassator che per Avanti è stato in Roma."

<sup>68</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 104rv./MPOII.109. "Circa li giovani che Vostra Santità li scrive saria ben mandasse a Roma, ancora non è risoluto, ben che l'abbia dato ad intender quanto importaria et per la sua diocesi et alli medesimi che andariano, et se non lo lassa per la paura ch' ha del infideli, è verisimile che mandará alcuni presto."

how to initiate doctrinal and dogmatic reforms.<sup>69</sup> The Copts were also open to helping the Jesuits learn Arabic, which would help bridge the cultural chasm.<sup>70</sup> In addition to the support received from Emo,<sup>71</sup> the French consul Guillaume Gardiolles also abated their fears. While Emo and the Venetian community were supportive, Gardiolles had spent over a decade in Egypt, establishing deep roots in Egyptian society. He was a close friend of the Coptic patriarch, and his many Ottoman associates held him in high regard. Gardiolles wrote to Gabriel on behalf of the Jesuits, stressing their benevolent desire to serve the spiritual needs of the Coptic community. And he even procured a Turkish janissary, one of the elite soldiers of the Empire, to be the Jesuits' personal bodyguard.<sup>72</sup> The Jesuits took advantage of the diplomatic and political favors that the French received from Constantinople in order to position themselves well on the mission.

Concerns alleviated, the Jesuits initiated more aggressive discussions about religious reform. As Láinez had explained before their departure, they were to work with Gabriel in particular. The Father General believed that if Gabriel were to submit, the rest of the Copts would as well. But Gabriel grew hesitant. In their early meetings, Gabriel seemed willing to consider the matter, and even suggested he would discuss it with leading Copts; but they gloomily reported that Gabriel was reluctant to write an oath of submission to Pius because he

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<sup>69</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 110r./MPOII.112. "Adesso procuramo d'intender tutte le cose, riti et costumi che lor hanno per trattar con loro de li essenziali de la fede pian piano conforme al instruttione di Vostra Paternità. In la prima che scriverò dopo questa le mandarò extensamente una lista de le cose che harò inteso che hanno."

<sup>70</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 110r./MPOII.112. "et ancora si procura d'imparar la lingua Arabica, non solo in parlar ma in legger et scriver, specialmente il Padre Baptista et il Fratello Alfonso, perché è molto importante pel agiuto de le anime."

<sup>71</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 109r./MPOII.120.

<sup>72</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 111r./MPOII.114. "et ha scritto al patriarcha, (il qual è il suo amico) in favor nostro, senza che io lo ricercasse, et ha dato 2 scudi al genizaro che per nostra sicurtà ci ha compagno fin al Cairo." Janissaries, originally the elite bodyguards of the Sultan, were Balkan Christian slaves pressed into military service and trained from the age of fourteen. For more on Janissaries in Ottoman Egypt, see Andre Raymond, "Soldiers in Trade: The Case of Ottoman Cairo," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 18, no. 1 (1991): 16-37. This letter is also copied and inventoried as ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 102r-103v.

believed it would anger the Coptic elders who had grown distrustful of Catholics.<sup>73</sup> Much like the concerns about sending Copts to Trent, the other issue that put great strain on the talks was Gabriel's fear of the Ottoman governor, Semin Ali Pasha. As the imperial representative in Egypt, he was supposed to execute the will of the sultan. However, on the ground Semin Ali Pasha tended to rule authoritatively with little interference from Constantinople; he was also often inimical toward the Coptic community.<sup>74</sup> Gabriel was aware that if the pasha saw such a union as undercutting his authority, the potential repercussions for the Copts were grave.<sup>75</sup> The close relationship that Gardiolles and Emo had with the Copts was already problematic enough; accepting a Catholic-Coptic communion was not worth losing the uneasy peace shared by the Copts with their Muslim neighbors.

Nevertheless, throughout January the nuncios carried on with their work, especially observing Coptic rites and customs. The list sent to Rome gives some sense of what the missionaries saw as the major distinctions between Catholics and Copts. First were their practices of pre-baptismal circumcision and full baptismal submersion. The Copts also renounced the *Filioque* clause of the Nicene Creed, denied that confirmation and marriage were Sacraments, and recognized only the first three ecumenical councils. The final heresy, which the Jesuits called *fundamentum omnium*, the basis of all things, was their belief that "the other patriarchs have the same power in their diocese as [the pope] in Rome, so that if he errs, the

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<sup>73</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 112r./MPOII.129. "Il patriarcha, come scrivo nela lettera prima, mi havea promesso di renovar con li suoi l'obedientia di Sua Santità et d'osservarla sottoscritta per li suoi successori, et mandar la copia ancora sottoscritta di loro a Sua Santità."

<sup>74</sup> Michael Winter, *Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule, 1517-1798* (London: Routledge, 1992), 31-36. On the pasha, Winter explains that "central Ottoman government gave him complete authority, which is reflected even in the structure and phrasing of imperial edicts. Although formally the edicts express the sultan's personal wish concerning even the most trifling matters, such as a raise in the pay of a common soldier, the decrees in fact confirm the pasha's proposals" (31-32).

<sup>75</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 112r./MPOII.129. "Ma lui ha le voce di Jacob ma le mani di Esau, perché sempre dà buona risposta che ha volontà, et c., ma mette molti escusationi et impedimenti, specialmente la paura di molti deli suoi et altri, che spesse volte l'offendono accusandolo al Bassà..."

other patriarchs are his judges.”<sup>76</sup> This list of Coptic beliefs, heretical to Catholics, illustrates the cavernous gap between the two sides. It also functions as a mirror by which Eliano could rearticulate his own adherence to a Catholic identity. At the top of the list, in Eliano’s own hand, it reads “I will say here the main points in which they err (*mancano*) concerning faith, according to how I understood it.”<sup>77</sup> Rather than using the verb *sbagliare*, Eliano chose *mancare*, which also could mean “to lack” in addition to “to err.” This suggests that their beliefs are the result of an absence, allowing him to fashion himself before Láinez as someone possessing what the Copts lack. As discussed above, when he recounted his meeting with his mother, he explained that he converted “by good judgment and by having learned the truth.” This juxtaposition of lacking and possessing tenets of faith intimates distinct boundaries between Copt and Catholic; nevertheless the capacity for crossing those boundaries, as Eliano’s life demonstrated, endured.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86 f. 114rv./MPOIL.134*. “Et fundamentum omnium, che non obediscono alla Chiesa catholica et a nostra Santissimo Padre, suo capo, se non in quello che li par, intendendo che li altri patriarchi habbian’ la medesima potestas ne le sue diocesi che lui in Roma, et che se lui mancasse, li altri patriarchi sariano li suoi giudici.” The first three ecumenical councils, held to be so by Catholics, Eastern Orthodox (Greeks) and Oriental Orthodox (Copts, Armenians, Syriacs, and others) were Nicaea (325), Constantinople (381), and Ephesus (431). The fourth ecumenical council was the Council of Chalcedon (451), which repudiated monophysitism, and was thus rejected by the Coptic Church. The Jesuits saw this as the definitive break between the Copts, who ceased to be in communion with Rome and the Greeks after 451, and the Catholic/Eastern Orthodox camp, which remained in communion for three more ecumenical councils (Second Council of Constantinople (553); Third Council of Constantinople (680); Second Council of Nicaea (787)). See Janet A. Timbie, “Coptic Christianity,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity*, edited by Ken Perry (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 94-116. For Chalcedon, see 95-98.

<sup>77</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86 f. 114v./MPOIL.134*. “Per non haver potuto haver’ tutte le cose et ceremonie che hanno li Cophti, dirò qui li principali in che mancano la fede, secondoché ho inteso.”

<sup>78</sup> The establishment of the core Catholic practices as the markers of Catholic identity in the Age of Confessionalization is, in part, the subject of Katharine J. Lualdi, “Persevering in the Faith: Catholic Worship and Communal Identity in the Wake of the Edict of Nantes,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35, no. 3 (October 1, 2004): 717-734. While about France in the later sixteenth century, Lualdi’s claim that “not only was attendance at the weekly parish Mass mandatory for all adult Catholics; the liturgy was also central to lay religious experience. Every Sunday, parishioners were bound together as a community through the collective rites and devotions of the Mass. For the laity, the liturgy culminated in the elevation of the consecrated host through which they were symbolically united in Christ’s real body” parallels the importance of rites such as the Sacraments and participation in a properly recited Creed for adherence to a confessional identity. Therefore, communal solidarity in Ottoman Egypt is centered on conformity to religious views, much as it would have been in bi-confessional France in the wake of the Edict of Nantes.

When Eliano's list was sent to Rome, the Jesuits had a clear plan of action, and despite Gabriel's reluctance and the Copts' fears of Ottoman intervention, they remained fairly upbeat. Regardless, unexpected challenges, far larger than reforming theology and ecclesiology, arose. Several events undercut their missionary activities, and many difficulties arose in January 1562. First, in mid January, an unnamed Copt reportedly desired to convert to Islam, but Gabriel prevented him from "turning Turk." Gabriel, ever cognizant of Islamic *sharī'ah* and the religious inferiority of *dhimmī* communities, recognized that attempting to prevent or reverse a conversion to Islam was a serious crime, often leading to the execution of both the apostate from Islam and anyone who encouraged the apostasy.<sup>79</sup> But Gabriel was also patently aware that conversion to Islam was a systemic problem in the Coptic community. With numbers dwindling and believers disbursed unevenly throughout Egypt, Gabriel would have been compelled to intervene and prevent the loss of one more Copt.

While Eliano suggests that the accusations were false, the potential choice would either draw the ire of the pasha or perpetuate the disintegration of the Coptic community. Sure enough, when Semin Ali Pasha got wind of the rumor, Gabriel rightly believed that his life was in danger, and prepared to flee to the desert of St. Anthony for Lent.<sup>80</sup> The Jesuits desired to accompany him, hoping that a forty-day reprieve from Ottomans and Jews would allow them to convince the patriarch to submit to Rome. Moreover, they embraced the opportunity to work with the monks

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<sup>79</sup> Reneged conversions to and from Islam and subsequent martyrdom is the subject of "Between the Turban and the Papal Tiara: Orthodox Christian Neomartyrs and Their Impresarios in the Age of Confessionalization," the fifth chapter of Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam*, 121-142. Likewise, "Championing a Communal Ethos: The Neo-Martyrdom of St. Salib in the Sixteenth Century," the second chapter of Febe Armanios recent work, demonstrates how these martyr stories functioned as means of communal solidarity in the face of Ottoman authoritarianism and even Catholic efforts at unity. See Febe Armanios, *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 41-64.

<sup>80</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86* f. 114r./MPOII.132. "Dopo de l'ultima, il patriarcha è stato accusato apresso il giudice de li Turchi, che impediva che un Christiano non si facesse turco. Et ancor che fosse bugia, con la grande paura che ha, è restato tanto perturbato che ancorché lo pregasemo spesse volte trattassimo del nostro negotio, lui lo dilata con dir' che l'primo di de Quaresima andiamo al deserto di S. Antonio, dove haremo luoco di trattar senza perturbatione."

of the desert, who were some of the most respected and learned Coptic theologians. However, before they could flee the city, the Jews lobbed complaints against Eliano. In addition to accusing him of refusing to pay old family debts, the Jews claimed that Eliano was “made Christian” to avoid them. The accusations were purportedly levied by Jews who knew him personally, perhaps family members. According to Rodríguez and Eliano, the Jewish community was powerful and had undue influence in Ottoman courts.<sup>81</sup> They feared that, if the right palms were greased, the Jews could have Eliano taken into Ottoman custody. The Venetian and French consuls would do their best to protect him, of course, but if the price were right, there would be little anyone could do.<sup>82</sup> Rodríguez, rather than allowing Eliano free travel in Cairo, again sequestered Eliano until departure for the desert.<sup>83</sup> At this point, Eliano’s personal security became a major issue on the mission, and it started to undercut hopes for gaining any traction.

These problems did not curb their efforts, however. In fact, their resolve was such that they continued to press Gabriel despite the threats on Eliano’s and the patriarch’s lives. Their labors seemed to pay off, for they believed that Gabriel was ready to sign a letter of submission by February. Once this letter was sent to Rome, and papal authority over the Copts was established, the Jesuits’ efforts would result in one more great triumph for the Roman Church.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> This influence is at least in part due to the propensity of Jewish money lenders in the Ottoman Empire. See Haim Gerber, “Jews and Money-Lending in the Ottoman Empire,” *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 72, no. 2, New Series (October 1, 1981): 100–118. Gerber does not conclusively claim that Jews predominated in the profession, but they nevertheless held a significant place in it.

<sup>82</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 114r./MPOII.133. “Et secondoché havemo inteso, la radice di questo è esser alcuni Giudei che lo conoscono, li quali incitano questo, offerendo aciò denari aciò lo perseguitano. Et qui non solo li Turchi ma anco li Iudei sono potenti, come dicono, per far quell che vogliono con li giudici.”

<sup>83</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 114r./MPOII.133. “Et cusi starà retirato il detto padre questi giorni fin ch’ andiamo al’ deserto col patriarcha, dove staremo questa Quaresima. Dopo andiamo sopra di noi guardando si quanto si potrà.”

<sup>84</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 116r./MPOII.137. “Adesso dirò alcune cose de li mezi che ho tenuto col patriarcha, acioché col divino agiuto cominzasse a trattar che lui et li suoi s’unissero con nostra santa madre chiesa romana. Et il primo che ho procurato, come ho scritto per Avanti, è stato darli intender’ l’obligatione che ogni Christiano ha di star sotto l’obedientia di quella et del suo capo et vicario di Christo et successor di S. Pietro, nostro santissimo Padre. Et havendo trattato alcune volte di quella, era persuaso a riconoscer quest’ obedientia con li suoi, et con lor

However, the Jesuits and Pius had a naïve understanding of Coptic ecclesiology. Unlike in Rome, where doubting papal primacy was called heresy, the Coptic patriarch was more first among equals than supreme arbiter of matters of faith; whereas the pope's authority was seen as coming from God alone, Gabriel's power came from the community. He was consequently bound by Coptic society and could not unilaterally make a decision concerning obedience to Rome and then will it on the Copts.<sup>85</sup> And Gabriel reported that when he sought the advice of Isaac, Coptic Archbishop of Nicosia, Cyprus, he was lambasted by the archbishop, who exclaimed that such a union would only harm the Copts, not help them. As the leading Copt in Venetian Cyprus, Isaac was well aware of what papal intrusion in matters of faith could mean. The constant jockeying for religious influence and doctrinal reform on Venetian island colonies was a major point of tension between the papacy and Venice, and minority communities like Copts, Greeks, and Maronites were often caught in the midst of that struggle.<sup>86</sup> Recognizing that he could not sign the letter of submission without Isaac's blessing, at least at that moment, Gabriel had to refuse.<sup>87</sup> The nuncios were unsure if this was just a convenient excuse on

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sottoscrizione servarla nel loco dove tengon servate le lor cose importante, acioché sempre servasse, et di mandar la copia di quello con la lor sottoscrizione a Sua Santità.”

<sup>85</sup> For more on the structures of the Coptic Church in Ottoman Egypt, see Armanios, *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt*, 22-31. Armanios directly discusses the decline of the office of the patriarchate from the Fatimid period (969-1171) through the Mamluk period and into Ottoman rule after 1517 on pp. 22-23.

<sup>86</sup> Benjamin Arbel, *Cyprus, the Franks and Venice, 13th-16th Centuries* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), particularly the articles focused on the Venetian period: “Régime colonial, colonisation et peuplement: le cas de Chypre sous la domination vénitienne” and “Résistance ou collaboration? Les chypriotes sous la domination vénitienne.” For more on religious dynamics between Venice and religious minorities as they played out in Venice and the *stato da mar* in the early modern period, see Massimo Costantini and Aliko Nikiforou, eds., *Levante veneziano: Aspetti di storia delle isole ione al tempo della Serenissima* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1996); Nicolas Karapidakis, *Civis fidelis: l'avènement et l'affirmation de la citoyenneté corfiote (XVIème-XVIIème siècles)* (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 1992); Chrysa Maltezou, ed., *Venezia e le isole ione* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di scienze lettere ed arti, 2005); Sally McKee, *Uncommon Dominion: Venetian Crete and the Myth of Ethnic Purity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Maddalena Redolfi, *Venezia e la difesa del Levante: Da Lepanto a Candia 1570-1670* (Venice: Arsenale, 1986); Antonio Santosuosso, “Religious Orthodoxy, Dissent and Suppression in Venice in the 1540s,” *Church History* 42, no. 4 (December 1973): 476-485; Maria Tiepolo, ed., *I Greci a Venezia* (Venice: Istituto veneto di scienze lettere ed arti, 2002).

<sup>87</sup> ARSI, *Epp*. NN 86 f. 116r./MPOII.138. “Et Abram da parte del patriarcha mi ha detto che non la poteva mandar adesso, metendo scuse futile; et persuadendoli che non mancassero di farlo, non solo non hanno voluto, ma

Gabriel's part, or if Isaac truly was against the union let alone knew about it. Given Isaac's later actions concerning the Jesuits,<sup>88</sup> it is probable that he would have opposed it. Regardless of Isaac's role in it all, the Jesuits and Gabriel had not settled on any agreement by the beginning of February 1562.

### Angry monks

The Jesuits spent much of February working within Cairo, mainly preparing for the voyage to the Monastery of Saint Anthony. On 7 March, the monks warmly welcomed the patriarch, his retinue, and his European companions. Despite the hospitality, Eliano grew pessimistic; he felt the Copts were mired in "great ignorance" and were "so firm in their opinions and errors," that correcting them was an insurmountable obstacle.<sup>89</sup> The Jesuits were also mortified to discover that Copts living in villages along the road to the monastery did not baptize their children in due time, and many were still unbaptized.<sup>90</sup> They implored Gabriel to order the baptisms of Coptic children, but he feared Muslim intervention in Christian celebrations, like communal baptism; they would have to wait for it to be more opportune.<sup>91</sup> In hopes that they

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danno segno di non volerlo far. Et la causa di questa mutatione, dicono che fu una letera del lor vescovo di Cipro, ne la qual si lamenta col patriarcha perché ha fatto quella unione (quod utinam verum diceret) et che il arcivescovo di Cipro li voleva abrugiar il lor' oglio de li infirmi, dicendi che li Cophti s' eran uniti con li Franchi, voleva che osservassero il ordine che lor tengono in quest' oglio.

<sup>88</sup> See below for Isaac and his refusal to cooperate with Eliano and to travel to the Council of Trent.

<sup>89</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 118r./MPOII.140. "Et come per la ultima ho scritto, è gran difficoltà in questo per la gran ignorantia loro et per esser tanto firmati nele suoi oppinioni overo errori, et per quello importa che Vostra Paternità faci sempre raccomandar questo negotio a Dio."

<sup>90</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 118r./MPOII.140. "Per la strada nele ville dove ci firmavamo, procurando di exortar quelli christiani che venevano visitar il patriarcha, de alcuni lor errori che intendevamo, far li quali è uno che alcuni padri non batezano li suoi figlioli fin ché già sono grandi..."

<sup>91</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 118r./MPOII.140. "In la strada trattando de questo col patriarcha del gran mancamento che si faceva in questo, et che lui, come supremo pastor di questa diocesi, poiché li suoi vescovi mancavano in questo, era obligato di metter tutti li mezzi acìò ché da piccolo si batizassero, lui, intendendo questa sua obligazione, ci ha detto che noi andassimo, se volevamo, in suo loco a far questo; ma che havea paura del pericolo che li Mori per la strada ci amazzariano." This account is not unique for Coptic Christians, or, for that matter, any *dhimmī* population. Febe Armanios recounts a Muslim reaction to an overt expression of Coptic identity when, in 1748, Muslims forced the disbanding of a procession headed to the Holy Land from Egypt. *Dhimmī* were



could buttress their position with the Copts, the Jesuits told Gabriel that they did not fear Ottoman officials and would even travel as far as Ethiopia to baptize Coptic youths, where there were “innumerable Christians that have children that have not been baptized.”<sup>92</sup> However, Gabriel was unwilling to acquiesce. So, after a month in the desert, the outlook of the mission remained bleak. Rodríguez and Eliano continued to acknowledge at least the possibility that Gabriel would yield. However, as long as leading Copts’ remained intransigent in their views concerning papal primacy, hopes of union continued to fade. The only chance, it seemed, was finding a way to lessen their opponents’ influence in the community and to secure Gabriel’s signature surreptitiously. If Gabriel signed, and was able to reach an agreement that obviated the fears of men like Isaac of Nicosia, then union could be secured. However, the quotidian vicissitudes of the mission made this less and less likely.

In early April, when Eliano and Rodríguez wrote their March reports to Rome, they were at their wits’ end. Prior to their arrival at the Monastery of St. Anthony, the missionaries often discussed the Copts’ dissimulation and oscillation between amicability and resistance. However, their time in the desert changed the tenor of their exchanges. While Gabriel maintained a peaceable stance, other leading Copts were increasingly hostile. The nuncios are partly to blame for this, as the tone of their reports suggest they grew more aggressive in their efforts to convert the Copts, which of course did nothing to soothe matters. This shift on the part of the Jesuits began in early March, when Gabriel seemed ready to sign the act of submission. He appointed Abraham and another Coptic theologian, Georgios, to discuss the matter. After some

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banned from ostentatious displays of religious identity, and open celebrations of baptism would have fallen in this category. Christian displays during Lent were particularly seen as suspect, and their suppression was endemic. See Febe Armanios, *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3-4.

<sup>92</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f.118r/MPOII.140. “Li ho risposto che volontieri andiamo per tutti li luochi dela sua diocesi, che è piu de 20 giorante verso la Ethiopia, dove sono innumeri Christiani che hanno figlioli che non sono baptizati, et che non hriamo paura, né de pericolo né de travaglio veruno, per far questo tanto gran servizio di Dio.”

deliberations, a document was drawn up in which Gabriel would fully acknowledge Pius's authority over all Christians.<sup>93</sup> As the time approached, the patriarch asked his personal assistant, a young priest named Gabriel, to review the documents.<sup>94</sup> This was the Jesuits' worst fear. In addition to calling him young and ignorant, Eliano felt that Brother Gabriel was inimical toward them and actively sought to sway the patriarch against Emo, Gardiolles, and the Jesuits. If he were to be the final arbiter concerning matters of union, they feared, then the months they had spent in Egypt would be for naught. The nuncios implored the patriarch to select someone else.<sup>95</sup>

But, the patriarch refused to change his mind and entrusted the final appraisals of the document to his assistant. Sure enough, upon reading it, Brother Gabriel exploded into a fit of rage, chock-full of anti-Chacedonian, anti-Catholic, anti-papal vitriol. He exclaimed that any Copt, Abraham and the patriarch included, who agreed to submission to Rome must be excommunicated. He accused Eliano and Rodríguez of attempting to confuse and deceive the patriarch on account of his ignorance, and declared that they should immediately return to their own country.<sup>96</sup> When it came to discussing doctrine, Brother Gabriel assailed the Jesuits for their

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<sup>93</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 121r./MPOII.146. "Il primo che procurai fu darli intender (secondo il ordine che ci ha dato il Padre General dal Reverendissimo Alexandrino et Vostra Signoria), con authorità et ragioni, mediante il divin agiuto, il principio catholico del obedientia a Sua Santità et che lui era giudice supremo per determinar li dubii che si offeriscono circa fides, sacramenta et scripturam, a cui determinatione ogni Christiano era tenuto a star, nel qual sono venuti, et anco che il patriarcha con li suoi renovasse l'obedientia et la servasse et mandasse a Roma ut supra."

<sup>94</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 121v./MPOII.148. "Et havendole letto, ha detto che sono tanto chiare et vere che non accadeva fossero sottoscritte; et desiderando che al' hora le sottoscrivesse, ha risposto che voleva che un prete, chiamato Gabriel, suo servitor, li scrivesse insieme, et dopo lui lo sottoscriveria."

<sup>95</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 121v./MPOII.148. "Noi conoscendo che quello prete è giovane ignorante et inimicissimo deli Franchi, il qual sempre ci faceva mala ciera senza nissuna causa non ostante che sempre l'accarezzavamo, contradicendoci lui continuamente in tanto che il patriarcha lo chiamava "Judas" contra di noi."

<sup>96</sup> ARSI, *Ep.* NN 86 f.149v./MPOII.166. "Come andando in sequente giorno al patriarcha come ci havea detto, accioché scrivendosi quelle due memorie in una le sottoscrivesse, dove insieme con lui eramo andati al detto Gabriel acio le scrivesse, il qual legendole ha detta che le voleva scriver, perché eran' contra la fede et che, se Abram diria quello, fosse excommunicato; et che noi havevamo falsificato la memoria di Giorgio, il altro de li duoi; et che andassimo al nostro paese; et che cercavano de ingannar il patriarcha; et che essendo il patriarcha ignorante, non saria se non quello che lui voleva. Et ha detto altre cose simile male, per le quale il patriarcha, per l'affetione che ha a questo giovane, s'è cecato et subito mutato nel parere di quello, et voleva che Gabriel legesse una carta dove si conteneva la sua fede per trattar di quella."

proposals that the patriarch accept the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon. He explained succinctly: after the hypostatic union, in which the divine and human persons of Christ became one, there was “one person resulting from two persons, and only one nature from two natures, and only one will made from two wills, and only one operation made from two operations,” and that any other view was heresy. Rodríguez and Eliano attempted to explain that this was “against the councils and the true Catholic faith,” but the young priest did not back down from his assertions, reminding the pair that these beliefs had been held by Copts since the fifth century.<sup>97</sup> “Seeing the pertinacity of this youth,” Rodríguez wrote in the report, “I said to the patriarch that I could not work with that man.” Rodríguez and Eliano then calmly departed from the meeting, hoping for better luck the following day.<sup>98</sup>

After a night apart, the two sides reconvened. Before the arrival of Brother Gabriel, Rodríguez and Eliano attempted to reason with the patriarch. They had hoped to convince him to go against the wishes of his assistant, and not to resist union because of the caprices of some

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<sup>97</sup> Throughout the letters, Eliano and Rodríguez also discussed the importance of liturgical and ritual change, not solely papal primacy and matters of dogma, for the Copts to be accepted as Catholic. Religious ritual and adherence to ritualistic norms are central to understanding religion beliefs and participation in the rituals associated with them as markers of cultural identity. I will discuss this further, from the Roman perspective, in the chapter entitled “The Society of Jesus Between Rome and the Christian Orient.” If we put Brother Gabriel’s reaction to the Jesuits’ overtures into the context of the Copts’ situation within Ottoman Egypt, Gabriel is defending both the beliefs and the rituals of the Coptic Church, which functioned as cultural parameters that separated them from their linguistic and societal kin, Egyptian Muslims. Clifford Geertz explains that “Religious belief has usually been presented as a homogeneous characteristic of an individual, like his place of residence, his occupational role, his kinship position, and so on. But religious belief in the midst of ritual, where it engulfs the total person, transporting him, so far as he is concerned, into another mode of existence, and religious belief as the pale, remembered reflection of that experience in the midst of everyday life are not precisely the same thing.” While the Copts attempted to use religion to homogenize collective identity, Gabriel’s defense of that religion is not solely to preserve its “remembered reflection,” but rather the preservation of religion as a mode of experience. For more on religion as a cultural system and as a formula constructed to create an in-group identity, see Clifford Geertz, “Religion As a Cultural System”, in Id., *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 87-125. See also Jan-Petter Blom, “Ethnic and Cultural Differentiation,” in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, edited by Fredrik Barth (Boston: Little Brown, 1969), 74-85.

<sup>98</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86* f. 149v./MPOIL.166. “Et dopo diceva: questo hanno li Cophti: in Christo, dopo de la unione, è una persona risultante da due persone, et una natura sola da due nature, et una sola volontà fatta da due volontà, et una sola operatione fatta da due operatione; al che havemo risposto quello esser contra li concilii et la ver fede catholica. Et vedendo la pertinatia di quel giovane, ho detto al patriarcha che non trattarei con quello, se non con li huomini intelligenti; che facesse venir quelli duoi o altro che stava apresso S. Antonio dove eramo; et cusi siamo partiti da lui con amorevolezza.”

young priest. However, Patriarch Gabriel explained that his aide was one of the most learned Copts, despite his age, and that what he extolled the day before was the truth.<sup>99</sup> At this point, Brother Gabriel disrupted the Jesuits' attempts to push the patriarch toward submission. Bearing in hand the decrees of the Council of Nicaea, he explained that no one patriarch was jurisdictionally superior to another. In fact, the Patriarchate of Alexandria was the oldest and therefore the most prestigious; Roman attempts to acquire anything beyond recognition of equal and mutual respect and honor directly violated the decrees of Nicaea.<sup>100</sup> They again engaged in Christological debates and volleyed accusations of heresy. The nuncios tried one last time: they implored the patriarch to accept their beliefs on the nature of Christ and submit to Roman authority lest all Copts be outside salvation.<sup>101</sup>

The patriarch did not budge. Rodríguez and Eliano unhappily reported that the patriarch and his associates had no desire to search for the truth, as they believed they had already received it from their ancestors. As their community had held their faith steadfast in the face of constant change for centuries, they had no desire now to change nor search for anything else.<sup>102</sup> Both sides must have been on edge at this point: Eliano and Rodríguez felt the mission was

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<sup>99</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 149v./MPOII.167. "Il giorno seguente havemo parlato al patriarcha pregandolo che.... Per amor di Dio si firmasse in quelle, et che solo per un parer d'un giovane non si mutasse, specialmente havendo detto tante heresie che un altro Cophto lo reprendeva in presentia sua. Al che ha risposto, che quello giovane era più dotto che tutti l'altri, et che diceva la verità, et che non si mutaria di niente di quello, perché quello era la sua fede."

<sup>100</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 149v./MPOII.167. "Facendo chiamar Gabriel, il qual ha portato seco una carta che diceva esser cavata dal Concilio niceno, che havea dopo de la divisione de li patriarchi, l'uno non era inferior al altro ma che il alexandrino è il maggior. Li quali quatro sono: alexandrino, romano, antiochino, efisino." (note: the inclusion of the Bishop of Ephesus is not accurate. The fourth patriarch would have been the Patriarch of Jerusalem. It is unclear why Ephesus is included here. This would be expanded to the Pentarchy after the Council of Constantinople (381) to include the Patriarch of Constantinople.)

<sup>101</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 149v./MPOII.167. "... et cusi al' hora dicevo a lui et tutti quelli altri che stavano presente da parte de Sua Santità, vicario di Christo, et de tutta la Chiesa catholica, come quello di una sola natura di Christo et tutte le altre cose de le due persone, una volontà et una operatione etc., erano contra li Evangelii, concilii, et tutta la fede, et che, se non le lassavano, che era impossibile salvarsi."

<sup>102</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 150r./MPOII.168. "Lui et li altri hanno risposto che non havevano che cercar, perché entendevano haver la vera fede che hanno havuto li lor passati, dalla quale non si volevano mutar né cercar altra."

unraveling; the Copts found their guests to be presumptuous heretical foreigners. Confused and worn out by the trajectory of the past two months, Eliano and Rodríguez began to wonder what went wrong and tried to explain the Copts' intransigence. The frustration was especially high because, all along, Abraham promised that union and Coptic obedience to Rome were only a patriarchal decree away; but the resistance to their overtures seemed to belie Abraham's promises. To them, the patriarch turned face when he claimed that Abraham was sent solely to make an offering of Christian peace between two equals, himself and Pius, and that Abraham's goal in Rome was never to render obedience.<sup>103</sup> Patriarch Gabriel said the Jesuits must have misinterpreted the letters.<sup>104</sup>

The Jesuits did not take kindly to this. And they were angered by the report from Lunardo Emo that the patriarch did not send Abraham to Rome to render obedience, and that the Coptic envoy probably altered the letters.<sup>105</sup> Emo's corroboration of these prevarications struck a nerve with the Jesuits; the main reason why the mission was delayed until 1561, fear of Abraham's duplicity, was coming to fruition. The missionaries' reaction to Abraham's deceit captures the essence of their sentiments: after everything that Pius, Laínez, cardinals, and the nuncios had done for Abraham, his only repayment was to betray them by showing himself "obstinate in so

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<sup>103</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 120r./MPOII.144. "Questa dissimulatione d'Abram et anco del patriarcha con che sempre hanno trattato, ho cognosciuto più chiaramente nel' deserto, dove il patriarcha mi ha scoperto la faccia, dechiarandomi Avanti li altri, come Abram, desiderando d'andar a Roma, lo pregòli desse una lettera di raccomandatione, et con solo quella è andato, ma non per dar l'obedientia..."

<sup>104</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 127v./MPOII.156. "Et diceva che quella medesima fede ha scritto al' papa con Abram, al' qual dicendo che havevamo la copia de quelle lettere che lui ha mandato, ne li quali non era niente de quella; al' che risponde che certissimo è che lui l' ha scritto, et che se non ci è, che l'harà mutato Abram, o che ha interpretate le sue lettere, et che se Abram l'ha mutato, sia excomunicato."

<sup>105</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 127v./MPOII.157. "Questo di Abram ha confermato il consol venetiano, dicendo al Padre Baptista chel' patriarcha li havea detto, quando ha scritto la 2.a volta a Roma, che lui non havea mandato Abram a Roma per dar la sua obedientia a Sua Santità, ma perché no li fosse fatto in Roma alcun ultragio. Come Abram havea paura, secondoché li havea scritto, per sua compassione ha scritto la 2.a lettera in tal forma, come lui lo pregava in quella lettera che li ha scritto."

many errors.”<sup>106</sup> While the tone of the report reflects their disappointment in the outcome, it also expresses a clear delineation between the just, virtuous acts of the Jesuits and the deleterious deceits of Abraham, who was outside the faith and thus lacked the moral rectitude of Eliano and Rodríguez. These “errors” in belief were symbols of a collective identity by which men like Gabriel and Abraham maintained their place in Coptic society. But the furious descriptions of them expressed in the reports also convey Eliano and Rodríguez’s prejudicial self-reflections; they used characteristics that they defined as Coptic as counterweights to articulate their own beliefs and their own adherence to what they saw as true Christian virtue.

The agonizing tone of the reports continued when they told of their decision to discuss matters with some of the monks, hoping that they could reason with these holy men who were independent of the sway of brother Gabriel yet ever influential in the Coptic community. Persuading the monks could influence the patriarch enough to change his mind and ignore the desires of his assistant. However, lacking any modicum of tact at this point, they explained to the monks that their beliefs were blasphemous, heretical, and against the true Church. Shockingly enough, the monks admonished them much like Brother Gabriel had: the monks shouted “injuries against us calling us heretics, crazies, and falsifiers, etc.,” and that they would never abandon the faith that was the foundation of their community.<sup>107</sup> These verbal assaults drove them from the monastery, dejected. The monks’ venomous reaction to these overtures weighed

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<sup>106</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 128r./MPOII.158. “In pagamento di tutti li beneficii et carezze che Sua Santità et li Reverendissimi Cardinali et Monsignor Fioribello hanno fatto al detto Abram in Roma, et noi per strada et qua servendoli, come servitori facendo quello che lui voleva, et spesse volte con il nostro incomodo et spese, et con tutto questo, con haver’ usato con lui tutti li mezzi che con consideratione et consigli havemo conosciuto buoni per far’, condescendendoli, acarezzandolo, humiliandoci demandandoli consiglio, etc., ha fatto tante mutationi, come ho detto, et resta ostinato in tanti errori, li quali non scrivo, perché saria troppo prolixo. Sed ad Dei gloriam; non ut notetur, sed ut re cognita si quin agendum omisimus moneamur a Vestra Paternitate.”

<sup>107</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 122r./MPOII.150. “Lasso l’ingiurie che contra di noi dicevano chiammandoci heretici, pazi, falsarii, etc.; ma non maraviglio, per esser loro molto inveterate in quelli errori dicendoci che li volevamo cavar dalla sua fede che havevano dalli suoi santi padri antichi.”

on the nuncios. Rodríguez was shocked by this behavior: “these were the caresses,” he said, “and the modesty that the brothers showed us.”<sup>108</sup> “Seeing that every day they demonstrate themselves more pertinacious,” Eliano and Rodríguez deemed it best to return to Cairo.<sup>109</sup> Along the way, they feared the many bands of thieves known to patrol the desert highways, and came upon a Cairo stricken by the plague.<sup>110</sup> They tried to work with a few of the Copts within the city and serve some of the city’s sick, but eventually decided that that was useless too. By the end of May, they were back in Alexandria to fulfill the spiritual needs of the city’s Catholic merchants. But this group was more interested in account books than bibles.<sup>111</sup>

Their retreat to Alexandria essentially closed any hope that the mission would find success. Both men attempted to meet with the patriarch again over the summer of 1562, but to no avail. He rejected their overtures, and they were permanently back in Alexandria by August. Considering the general failure of the mission, Rodríguez and Eliano admitted that they would like to be moved to India, Ethiopia, Japan, anywhere, really.<sup>112</sup> They lamented to Laínez at the

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<sup>108</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86 f. 127v./MPOII.157*. “Queste eran le carezze et la modestia che li frati ci monstravano ne li ultimi giorni.”

<sup>109</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86 f. 127v./MPOII.157*. “Dopo haver’ stato 19 giorni nel’ monasterio, vedendo che ogni giorno si mostravano più pertinaci, in loco di agiutarsi, havemo giudicato esser buono tornar al Cairo, il che havemo fatto pigliando una letera del patriarcha per quelli duoi sopradetti, acioché trattasero con noi, poiché Abram ha mancato di venir’ al deserto come havea promesso, et cusì siamo partiti, dandoli però primo tanto et davanzo di quello che si poteva spender nel’ magnar’ nel monasterio et de la andata et tornata et de li camelli.”

<sup>110</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86 f. 122v./MPOII.151*. “Arivati al Cairo con gran pericolo deli Arabi ladri dele strade, et non con manco pericolo nel Cairo per la gran peste che ci è, siamo andati alcuni giorni, ogni dì, alle case di quelli duoi per trattar con lor.”

<sup>111</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86 f.138v./MPOII.200*. “Per non haver che far con li Cophti, stiamo qui in Alessandria... Et ancor che qui siano più Franchi che nel Cairo, sono tanto impediti nele sue mercantile che quasi mai vogliono ascoltar parolla spirituale.” On the Latin community of Egypt, see Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*. Frazee explains (p.62) that “The Latin faith was represented in Egypt by French, Catalan and Venetian merchants who had come there to trade... Latin Catholics lived in Egypt for the sake of profit. Most were young men without families who intended to spend only a few years in the Orient before returning home. Their interest in religion was not high. For them, the Sunday Eucharist was more a social than a religious event, which allowed them to learn the latest news from Western Europe, and to discuss the arrival and departure of ships and the prices obtained for cargoes.”

<sup>112</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86 f. 138r./MPOII.192*. “Et cusì dicevo che, restando questi Cophti cusì pertinaci, che vedesse Vostra Paternità se saria ben di mandarci al’ India over al’ Ethiopia, poiché siamo quasi ne la meza strada,

close of the summer that the Copts' "obstinacy is so great that not only the patriarch but all the others say that they will never leave their sect, in which are many heresies, and that they will have nothing to do with the pope, because he is not the head of the church, but only the Franks." By that point, it had been three months since the last meeting, because "every time that we interact, they demonstrate themselves more heretical and schismatic, that it was better not to interact anymore."<sup>113</sup> The Copts' defense of their collective beliefs undercut the efforts of the Jesuits, and the mission failed. Nevertheless, the Jesuits' reactions to Coptic obstinacy, mostly written by Eliano, reflect a similar Catholic obstinacy. Both sides were equally intransigent, and compromise was never within the realm of possibility. So, with the mission in shambles, it appeared that they would prepare to leave Egypt. However, just as they believed the disasters of their experience were behind them, Eliano's past would come back to prevent their departure.

### **The end of the Mission**

September 1562 was an idle month. Eliano and Rodríguez continually met resistance when they attempted to work with the Catholics of Alexandria. And matters worsened when, on 9 October, Eliano was seized by conspiring Jews and Muslims.<sup>114</sup> The Venetians and French were up in arms over the arrest, but the contrivances of the Jews and Muslims were too much: angered by Eliano's conversion and burning of Talmudic texts in Rome in 1553, the Jews

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et alle volte si trova compagnia per andar, ancor che sia alcun pericolo. Per il che ancor che sia inutilissimo, col' divin' agiuto potrò servir in questo quello ch' ordinarà l'obedientia, praecipue verso il Giapan..."

<sup>113</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f.138v./MPOII.200. "Et l'ostinatione loro è tanto grande che non solo il patriarcha ma tutti li altri dicono che lassarano la sua setta nela quale sono molte heresie, et che non hanno che fare col' Papa, perché non è capo dela Chiesa, ma solo dei Franchi. Per li miei peccati già sono circa 3 mesi che non trattamo con loro per non volerci dar luoco. E vero che per la lor pertinatia, ogni volta che trattavamo, si mostravan più heretici et scismatici, per il che era meglio non trattar più, ancor che ci dessero luoco."

<sup>114</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 143r./MPOII.216. "A 21 del presente certi Judaei con alcuni Turchi hanno pigliato il Padre Baptista, et menato al cadì, il giudice deli Turchi, menazzandoli Judaei ch' l'harian far brusar."



accused Eliano of speaking against Islam.<sup>115</sup> This crime greatly troubled Rodríguez, Emo, and Gardiolles, as the penalty certainly would have been a death sentence. The consuls did their best to free Eliano, but it was a costly endeavor indeed.<sup>116</sup> Because of their economic and political connections in Alexandria, the Jews were poised to influence Turkish officials, Semin Ali Pasha in particular,<sup>117</sup> and the Jews had paid a high price to secure the arrest, so it would take a hefty ransom to convince the Ottomans of his innocence. Eliano spent most of October and November in an Ottoman prison, first in Alexandria, and then was moved to Cairo to be presented before Semin Ali Pasha. In due course, Gardiolles and Emo secured his freedom from the Cairene prison. And as it was decided he should quickly leave Egypt clandestinely, he boarded a Venetian vessel dressed as a Venetian silk merchant, departing on 26 November.<sup>118</sup> Next, of course, was the maritime carnage described in the introduction to this chapter, where he heard confessions and prayed alongside the others stranded in the sea.<sup>119</sup> After throwing himself into the waters, he safely washed up on the shores of Cyprus. Eliano then spent the next few months

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<sup>115</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86 f. 143v./MPOII.217*. “Secondo che tutti dicono et si ha inteso a bocca dalli Judei, il principal che pretendono è farlo abusar, levandoli testimonio falso di Turchi che ha detto biasfeme contra la fede di Maometto, ut verbis eorum utar, quello dicono per vendicarsi per che ha fatto brusar il Talmud in Roma, et ha fatto altre cose mote contra lor.”

<sup>116</sup> Emo went so far as to write to the Doge, Girolamo Priuli, to secure further aid for Eliano. See Archivio di Stato di Venezia, *Senato – Dispacci del Console ad Alessandria*, fasc. 1 n. 35./MPOII.218-219.

<sup>117</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86 f. 115r./MPOII.269*.

<sup>118</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86 f. 214r./MPOII.233*. “Io, anchorché per la bontà di Dio fosse parecchiatissimo di far tanto quanto fusse stato più per servitio di Dio anco fin alla morte, conoscendolo per summo beneficio che Dio mi haria fatto, nondimeno il magnifico consolo con li altri mercanti, dopo oviato al pericolo con spender circa 40 ducati, hanno giudicato essere bono che io occultamente mi partissee di là con una nave che per quelli giorni si doveva partire; et così li parse anco al padre Christoforo, dandomi viatico et patente et tutto il necessario per il viaggio.”

<sup>119</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86 f. 214r./MPOII.233*. “Io per la bontà di Jesù Christo, ancorché mi ero già parechiato per render conto a Dio, mai ho mancato in quella notte et quella matina di far il officio de la nostra benedetta Compagnia; et cusi quella notte furono confessati asaisissimi, concedendosi Dio, per sua misericordia, quel tempo miracolosamente, tenendo quella sola ancora; et cusi, havendo meco alcune ave marie benedette, distribuì a molti, aciò, se moressero, Dio per sua misericordia li raccogliesse nela sua santa gloria, essendo maxime tanto contriti tutti, che mi davano in tal tempo gran consolatione.” The remainder of this letter goes into great detail about his experience with the Copts and other discussions that are not directly pertinent to the narrative.

sojourning on the island, performing whatever spiritual duties he could. Seeing his skills were better utilized elsewhere, he returned to Italy on 26 June 1563.<sup>120</sup>

While Eliano was in Cyprus, Cristóbal Rodríguez and Alfonso Bravo were still in Egypt. Rodríguez heard no news through much of February and March. With no directives, he was unsure whether or not he should return to Rome or reengage with the Copts.<sup>121</sup> By February, he had heard from a Florentine merchant, Francesco Vifali, that his presence in Rome was requested. But without anything official from Láinez or Pius, he stayed put.<sup>122</sup> Later in the month, he received the news of Eliano's shipwreck, but lamented that there was no word whether Eliano had survived.<sup>123</sup> Eventually, they were cleared to leave for Italy. It is unknown what Cristóbal Rodríguez and Alfonso Bravo achieved between Rodríguez's last letter (21 February 1563) and Lunardo Emo's dispatch to Doge Girolamo Priuli announcing their departure on 29 March.<sup>124</sup> By 8 May 1563, Rodríguez and Bravo were in Venice, seven weeks ahead of Eliano. Eliano and Rodríguez's diary also gives very little evidence for what occurred in Egypt after Eliano's departure. Rodríguez detailed his efforts in the liberation of an imprisoned Portuguese

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<sup>120</sup> ARSI, *Ital.* 123 f. 49r./MPOII.271. A letter from Cesare Helmi to Francisco de Borja: "Arrivò finalmente a salvamento et con bonissima cera il Padre Battista Romano con le galee de Venetiani, et credo darà qualche buona relatione di molte carezze che gli sono stati fatte in Cypro et nella galea, et de qualche buon frutto che vi ha fatto."

<sup>121</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 169r./MPOII.251. "Mai ho habuto lettera in risposta de quello che ho scritto de 7 abril del 62 in qua più de 20 volte circa la pertinatia del patriarcha et tutti li altri Copti in tanti heresie, e che ci mandase Vostra Paternità orden de quello che fariamo, poi li Copti per la lor pertinatia no ci volono scultar; già sono 8 mesi in tratar più dicendo che è indarno, che, anchorché li tagleno la testa, mai lassarano quelle cose."

<sup>122</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 169r./MPOII.251.

<sup>123</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 170r./MPO.253. "ho scritto a Vostra Paternità, replicando la andata del Padre Baptista costi ali 26 novembre del 62 con la nave quarina venetiana, la qual dicono che se ha roto in Cipro con fortuna, ma che li huomini sono salvati; ma non se sa cosa certa."

<sup>124</sup> Archivio di Stato di Venezia, *Senato-Dispacci del Console ad Alessandria*, fasc. 1. N. 36./MPOII.265. "Il Reverendo Padre Don Cristoforo Rodriguez, nuntio di Sua Santità, secondo gli ordini havuti da Roma, partì a buon viaggio con la nave Priula, al quale giusta li ordini di V. Serenità non si ha mancato di ogni favore et aiuto in ogni occorrenza sua et delli Compagni. Che Iddio gli guardi et salvi."

Jesuit, Fulgencio Freire. Freire had been detained in Cairo after his arrest in Moka, modern-day Yemen.<sup>125</sup> But beyond this, the story of the first Jesuit mission to the Copts ends.

## Conclusions

Cristóbal Rodríguez finished the *Relazione*, or final report, of the mission some time after his return to Venice. With hindsight, Rodríguez recounted how the mission was doomed from the beginning: “If what the said Abraham had said and did in Rome were true and not false,” he wrote, “this mission would have been most felicitous for the health of those unhappy souls.”<sup>126</sup> Rodríguez then gave a brief overview of the failed mission. He told how they engaged the Copts for nine wasted months, and how deliberations over doctrine and papal primacy were all pointless, idle efforts. He excoriated the Copts for their “pertinacity, malice and ignorance, and above all great deceitfulness in practice.”<sup>127</sup> He then condemned Gabriel VII for his resistance to unity with Rome. But then the *Relazione* takes an odd turn. The rest of the report discusses the various other groups with whom the Jesuits interacted and how the Jesuits navigated Ottoman Egypt; in the remaining five pages of the report, the Copts are mentioned only three times.

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<sup>125</sup> The diary is housed in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emanuele II, Sala manoscritti, *Fondo Gesuitico n. 1636*. It is also found at MPOII.272-299. It gives great detail about the pair’s personal views of the mission, their take on the interactions with the Copts, and the discussion of Fulgencio Freire, which is on f. 6v.: “De Fulgentio, come se conforma con pacientia [...] che per che con la volontà da Dio ne la sua schiaveza e che io, quando c’è opportunità, et nela sua casa se dà logo, le consolamo con parole et denarij, et che su patron sta pertinace in demandar per lui mille venetiani, secondo che intendemo. Come io sto sempre con molti indispositioni, e che se forse no voleno pagare li 1620 scudi, che subito scrivano, et in caso che io sia partito per orden dela obedientia, che lo scrivano a Messer Paolo Mariani, mercadante venetiano che lui li mandarà con diligenza.” It also goes into far greater detail concerning the daily disputes and theological discussions they had with the Copts, which are long elaborations on the accounts from letters sent to Rome, which are addressed earlier in this chapter.

<sup>126</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 155r./MPOII.300-301. “Et se fosse stato vero et non ficto quello che il detto Abraham disse et fece in Roma, dando l’ubidientia da parte dal patriarcha, saria stata questa missione fecilissima per la salute di quelle infelici anime; ma secondo pare et poi ci disse il medesimo patriarcha, tutto fu simulatione et fittione, affermandici che mai li venne in mente unirsi con la Chiesa Romana, non che mandasse il detto Abraham a questo effetto.”

<sup>127</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 155r./MPOII.301. “perché certo pare che hanno il bisogno di mezi molto straordinarii per la loro pertinacia, malitia et ignoranza, et sopra tutto gran fittione nel praticare...”

Despite how their experience with the Copts concluded and despite the other dangers they faced, he was happy to report that they had stayed positive and, “among so many Moors, Greeks, renegades, heretics, schismatics that are there,” they kept performing spiritual duties for anyone who desired them in order that “[God] convert those wretched people to our holy faith.”<sup>128</sup> The conviction that Rodríguez claimed he and Eliano maintained is impressive considering the situation. The constant pressures they faced from Jews, Muslims, and disinterested or even hostile Christians caused significant problems. But their resilience through these pressures encapsulates the identity politics they were attempting to navigate on this mission. The external forces at play in Ottoman Egypt (the autocratic rule of Semin Ali Pasha, Jewish alliances with Turks, Coptic resistance, Greek hostility, and stretches of ambivalence on the part of Catholic merchants) forced the Jesuits, Eliano in particular, to defend their Catholic identity. Despite often making distinctions between the groups hostile toward them, Rodríguez and Eliano habitually described the plurality of potential threats in Ottoman Egypt collectively by branding them with generic terms like heretical, schismatic, false, pertinacious, and ignorant. This linguistic bifurcation mirrors the rhetorical arsenal of Europeans in the religious conflicts that were part and parcel of the Age of Confessionalization. Eliano and Rodríguez’s descriptions of religious and cultural Others reflect how devotion to a confessional identity necessitated the existence of non-adherents who were beyond the confines of one’s confession. In other words,

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<sup>128</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 86 f. 155v./MPOII.302. “procurammo, col favor divino, per tutto il nostro viaggio, etian in quelle parti, d’osservare sempre il nostro Istituto et regole con la frequentatione de Sacramenti, oratione et essami che usa la Compagnia; et per li pericoli, che per mare et per terra; tra tanti Mori, Giudei, rinegati, heretici, schismatici che di là sono, ogni giorno ci si offerivano, usavamo più allo spesso l’oratione, massime per pregare il Signore a fin che convertisse quelle misere genti alla nostra santa fide, et per questo et altre cose di più, si universali come particolari, dicevamo ogni di le letanie, con la disciplina sempre che vi era luogo commodò, et per più eccitarci, si faceva fra noi ogni settimana comunemente una essortatione, come si usa nella Compagnia.”

what allowed Eliano and Rodríguez to fashion themselves as true Catholics was the reality of clearly delineated borders beyond which lay non-Catholics.<sup>129</sup>

But we must not consider Eliano and Rodríguez solely as Jesuits engaged in “othering;” they were two *conversos* using these terms to resist crossing the barrier located between two collective identities; and Eliano was acutely preoccupied with this, as he had already done so his own lifetime. This preoccupation with religious borders is quite profound in the *Relazione* when Rodríguez detailed their successes and failures in procuring conversions. Their ability to convert five German Lutherans and to convince renegade Christians to return to Europe is juxtaposed to the Greeks, who “are so obstinate in their heresies and hate for the Roman Church that they, as they say, more readily desired to become Turks than undergo obedience to the Holy Roman Church.”<sup>130</sup> This contrast both undermines and bolsters the boundaries between religious confessions. Greek intractability is pervasive in Catholic accounts; yet the claim that Greeks would rather convert to Islam than Catholicism created a complex Catholic-Greek-Muslim triangulation in which confession-building centered on navigating polyvalent and permeable currents, not the religious binaries stressed in the *Relazione*.<sup>131</sup> This is reaffirmed as well when a man Rodríguez described simply as a “Greek Turk” promised to convert to Christianity.<sup>132</sup> While

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<sup>129</sup> This creation of a confessional identity from a minority perspective based on identity markers grounded in religious practice, while in the context of Huguenot France, is the subject of Raymond Mentzer “Fashioning Reformed Identity in Early Modern France,” in *Confessionalization in Europe, 1555-1700: Essays in Honor and Memory of Bodo Nischan*, edited by John M. Headley, Hans J. Hillerbrand, and Anthony J. Papalas (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 243-255.

<sup>130</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 156r-157v./MPOII.305. “Li Greci sono sì ostinati nelle loro heresie et odio della Chiesa Romana che più presto come essi dicevano, volevano diventar Turchi che sottoporsi all’obedientia della Santa Chiesa Romana.”

<sup>131</sup> Sally McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*; Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Eric Dursteler, “Education and Identity in Constantinople’s Latin Rite Community, c. 1600,” *Renaissance Studies* 18, no. 2 (2004): 287-303.

<sup>132</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 157r./MPOII.306. “Un altro Greco Turco, interprete di detto console, mi ha promesso molte di fuggirsene alla christianità, havuta che havrà la prima opportunità.”

the conversions are couched in religious language, discussing converts in terms of their national identity illuminates that one's faith was also cultural and ideological self-expression.<sup>133</sup>

The *Relazione*, of course, ends where the mission does: Eliano's arrest and escape. Rodríguez does not go into great detail about the event, only elucidating that "we were visited with many trials and persecutions by the Jews, among which was the one against the Father Baptista Romano, my companion."<sup>134</sup> He left out that the Jews of Egypt constantly accused Eliano of treachery, deception, hidden identity, and faking his Christianity to avoid the "reality" of his Judaism. But despite being why Eliano left Egypt, his arrest was not why the mission failed. The mission was over long before the arrest. It concluded when the Copts verbally assaulted the missionaries, called them heretics, and essentially expelled them from Cairo for their affront to Coptic identity. The symbols of "Coptiness" (their Christology, ecclesiology, liturgy, understanding of the sacraments, etc.) were the Jesuits' direct targets. But the actions of brother Gabriel, the monks of the desert, and the patriarch himself were not solely about Coptic resistance to the Jesuits' efforts to reform religious doctrine or push papal primacy. The Copts were engaged in a sectarian, confessional struggle against Muslims, Jews, Greeks, and Catholics that the Jesuits only exacerbated with their presence in Ottoman Egypt. While overtures to Rome were surely made (the patriarch admitted as much), the idea of submitting to any authority beyond the community itself would definitively alter Coptic identity forever. From the

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<sup>133</sup> I use the term "ideological" here, in part, to mean an "ordered system of cultural symbols." But more importantly, we must see those symbols as reflective of the context in which those symbols are given meaning. Therefore, ritual acts such as holding a crucifix or confessing sins as death is impending cannot be seen as simply reflecting an "ideology," but rather are reflecting the ideology through their contextualization into a standardized belief system. In short, the act's ideological meaning is conveyed by the context, which is the *sine qua non* for the act to convey meaning. See Geertz "Ideology as a Cultural System," in Id., *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 193-233.

<sup>134</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 157v./MPOIL.307. "In questo tempo ancora fummo visitati con alcuni travagli et persecutioni de' Giudei, fra le quali fu una contra il Padre Baptista Romano, mio compagno, nella quale pagai da 130 scudi per poterlo mandar libbero in Italia con una nave venetiana, delli quali danari li 100 scudi furon di limosina fattami dalli mercanti, il resto della limosina che Sua Santità ne havea dato."

perspective of the Jesuits and Pius IV, this was, of course, heresy. But there was nothing they could have done in the face of the Copts' intractability. So while the imprisonment and escape of Eliano was technically the final blow, had he and Rodríguez spent years rather than months in the desert, it seems they would have gained little ground. In the end, the Copts rejected Rome because of its obstinate and unequivocal belief that the Jesuits were heretics.

And this same obduracy was apparent in Eliano as well. Eliano's adherence to his new faith was hardened by the events surrounding his arrest and flight, as it instilled in him a sense of himself and his place within the early modern Catholic world. The rejection of his Jewish past, while solidifying his Catholic identity, suggested a preoccupation with hardening the fluid borders that separated – but did not disconnect – fixed collective identities. Moreover, the Jewish community's attacks against him inculcated an attachment to his Catholic identity. When Eliano recounted his experience in Egypt, he attempted to reaffirm his desire to convert the Copts as well as reiterate his own conversion, an effort that demonstrates both the perceived concreteness of his own identity and his effort to rely on religious fluidity to complete his missionary objectives. Eliano's writings are a demonstration of his adherence to values that hinge upon Catholic religious and cultural signposts. Just as he had to reject the larger structures of Judaism in order to embrace Catholicism, he continually had to promote his Catholic identity.

When Eliano emphatically articulated his Catholicness in the face of accusations of crypto-Judaism, he constructed an outward self-image grounded in cultural features that signaled ethnic boundaries. This allowed Eliano to dichotomize between insiders (Catholics) and outsiders (Jews, Copts, Greeks, Turks, etc.), a dichotomy (or polychotomy) that persisted as long as these groups maintained their separate but interrelated existences. But it was impossible to reject his Jewish past. The ease by which Eliano converted and the assaults he faced for

“apostatizing” exhibit how ethnic and religious boundaries are not purely drawn on the basis of some kind of inventory of differences in cultural elements, but are drawn on cultural similarities and the ease of diffusion between groups. This divided connectedness is most evident in how, despite his attempts to separate himself from his past identity, Eliano was the logical choice for this mission because of his knowledge of Semitic languages and his ability to navigate these cultures more successfully than the average Jesuit missionary. Eliano is then indicative of how cultural definition is grounded in ethnic group interdependence; because he never could fully reject his former past, he struggled to separate himself from his Jewish identity and validate himself within the larger community of early modern Catholicism.<sup>135</sup>

Eliano articulated specific types of binaries that, while perceived and constructed, were central to the process of his self-definition. They participated in the construction of Catholic identity in the Ottoman Empire, and positioned themselves within it, by articulating what it meant to be Catholic and what it meant to be non-Catholic. Rodríguez and Eliano were reacting against very permeable barriers by attempting to construct finite walls separating cultural polarities. The pressures of being *conversos*, Catholics, and Europeans in Ottoman Egypt reflect

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<sup>135</sup> This type of self reflection and concern with the construction of collective identities is prevalent in early modern literature concerning travel and experience in the Mediterranean World. New historicist research on early modern Mediterranean identities has stressed that scholarly reliance on binaries such as Self/Other, West/East, colonizer/colonized tends to break down under scrutiny. Daniel Vitkus explains that “religious and racial affiliations are unstable, giving the audience a sense of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian identities as interchangeable roles in a Machiavellian marketplace where identity was a slippery matter indeed, and where... various forms of foreignness (or religious difference) were blurred, or in some cases, indistinguishable.”<sup>135</sup> The question of alterity and the prevalence of polyvalent Others in the Mediterranean transformed it from a geographic place of conflict into an intellectual, shared space. This self-proclaimed “post-Braudelian” intellectual approach to seeing the Sea as a space of unity and common experience allows us to view the permeability of identity juxtaposed with the firmness with which such identities are defended by figures like Giovanni Battista Eliano. Goran V. Stanivukovic, *Remapping the Mediterranean World in Early Modern English Writings* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). In this collection, contributors attempt to “examine how early modern English imagination conceptualized the intermingling categories of sameness and difference, of otherness and familiarity, which were produced through complete and often ambiguous contacts between Renaissance England and the Mediterranean, especially the eastern Mediterranean” (1). Not only do they attempt to see the Mediterranean as place where English could project imperialist fantasies, but it also brought real Mediterranean concerns to the fore.



how concepts such as nationhood and identity were in fact quite important and needed to be defended and preserved. And the pressures of being in a foreign land rendered these identity markers far too fluid to preserve themselves.<sup>136</sup> This mission encapsulates the fear of the fluidity of identity, and just how prevalent it was in the early modern consciousness, even if it was never articulated in these terms. Despite how analyzing the Jesuit experience mollifies the boundaries between collective identities, Eliano and Rodríguez exemplify how fixed these “elastic” boundaries must have seemed.

The pressure that these questions of identity put on Eliano also speaks to the larger role individual preoccupations played in the process of confession-building. Rather than being a passive character in the story of Catholic confessionalization, Eliano had to carve out a path toward participating in, and strengthening, the larger corpus of early modern Catholicism. His Jewish past continually dictated that path, even after conversion. The persistent resurfacing of his Jewish past demonstrates that becoming Catholic, and staying Catholic, was dictated by unique personal experiences. Becoming confessionalized was not merely following along with larger religio-political structures. And social-disciplining simply could not be about larger pressures to conform. The pulse of confessionalization relied equally on social anxieties and individual restlessness about defining oneself.

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<sup>136</sup> Alan Stewart, “‘Come from Turkie’: Mediterranean Trade in Late Elizabethan London,” in *Remapping the Mediterranean World in Early Modern English Writings*, edited by Goran V. Stanivukovic (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). Stewart sees London as a new Mediterranean city, full of new faces and new ideas. The idea of commercial cosmopolitanism stresses the porous construction of Mediterranean identity and the belief that London, by means of the introduction of Mediterranean goods (often in the form of cultural capital) can itself be considered a Mediterranean city. Alan Stewart also explains that the notion of “commercial cosmopolitanism” is the result of cultural interconnectedness, and that the growth of commercial exchange augmented the permeability of difference in the early modern Mediterranean. An important work on the Jesuits in particular is Jennifer D. Selwyn, *A Paradise Inhabited by Devils: The Jesuits' Civilizing Mission in Early Modern Naples* (Aldershot; Rome: Ashgate; Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2004). Selwyn explains that the Jesuits saw the Neapolitans as culturally backward, in need of being civilized and religiously purified. Even within Europe, the civilizing imperative was undergirded by an us-versus-them complex driven by cultural interdependence.

## + Chapter Two +

### Turning Turk at Mount Lebanon

Lastly, oh may I be the last of all my country  
That trust unto your tretcheries, seducing tretcheries.  
All you that live by theft and Piracies,  
That sell your lives and souls to purchase graves,  
That die to hell, and live far worse then slaves,  
Let dying Ward tell you that heaven is just,  
And that dispaire attends on blood and lust.

- Robert Daborne, *A Christian Turn'd Turk*, Scene 16, 315-321<sup>1</sup>

Death imminent, Captain Jack Ward, the protagonist of Robert Daborne's 1612 play *A Christian Turn'd Turk*, spoke the above lines as he looked back on his abandonment of Christian virtue in exchange for Muslim vice driven by his cupidinous desire to wed the beautiful Turk, Voada. Ward's derision of having turned Turk reflects how, for him, the great fortune and fame he had acquired through his piratical exploits did not bring him what he thought they would. The liberation he sought through conversion to Islam and the unhindered brigandage that came with it did not provide for Ward the self-determination he had desired. Rather, the "choice" to convert to Islam resulted in a prison of vices; and eternal damnation was the only escape. This diatribe against Islam also represents for the audience how turning Turk was inherently duplicitous. Despite raging against the rapacious slavery of Islam, Ward would rather meet his death as a Muslim than consider a life outside of the world in which he is enslaved. The deceit further comes through when Ward exclaims that "Lastly, oh may I be the last of all my country" to convert. His status as a Muslim is all the more scandalous because of his English blood. Despite his obstinacy in his conversion, he somehow remains English. For the early modern theatergoer, Ward's call for the justice of heaven and the despair that lies in the lustfulness of turning Turk

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<sup>1</sup> The play, in its entirety, can be found in Daniel J. Vitkus, ed., *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England: Selimus, A Christian Turned Turk, and The Renegado* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 148-239. The above quote is found on pp. 230-231.

demonstrated that his Englishness was corrupted and irrevocably altered, and so would theirs be should they fall into the apostatizing trap of Turkish carnality. More importantly, should enough Englishmen turn Turk, England itself would become a center of vice, lasciviousness, and Muslim slavery, a future only slightly more deplorable than a return to the Roman Church.

Loosely based on the life of English-turned-Muslim Barbary pirate John Ward, Daborne's play highlights many of the *topoi* of early modern European literature concerning religion and identity in the Mediterranean world: the duplicitous Jew, the ravenous Moor, the contagion of the Turk, and the slippery, shape-shifting renegade. Ranging from Christopher Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* to Shakespeare's *Othello* and *Merchant of Venice* the early modern Mediterranean in literature was a place where religious identities meshed and where individuals either traversed or preserved cultural boundaries that centered on constructs such as "Turk," "Greek," or "Jew." Furthermore, the temptation of religious conversion and the appeal of turning concerned more than religious identification. They resulted in the complete alteration of the individual's place in society.

But this view of the early modern Mediterranean did not exist solely on the London stage or in a Venice printing house. These literary tropes that became the hallmark of commercial cosmopolitanism in the seventeenth century grew out of the very real fears and anxieties of the sixteenth-century European experience of the Ottoman World.<sup>2</sup> Ottoman corsairs were a true threat, and the fear of being seized by the Turks and cast to the galleys was real enough for the expression *pigliato dai turchi* to become an idiom in Sicily and southern Italy for confusion or

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<sup>2</sup> Daniel J. Vitkus, "Turning Turk in Othello: The Conversion and Damnation of the Moor," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (July 1, 1997): 145–176; Alan Stewart, "'Come from Turkie': Mediterranean Trade in Late Elizabethan London," in *Remapping the Mediterranean World in Early Modern English Writings*, edited by Goran V. Stanivukovic, 157–177.

surprise.<sup>3</sup> And loyalty and nationhood were murky at best, as individuals often switched religious or national allegiances whenever it seemed politically, socially, or economically advantageous.<sup>4</sup>

The leaders of Counter-Reformation Europe were also cognizant of how problematic the Turk had become. While the Ottoman Empire had been on the fringes of the European purview for some time, the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 thrust the Ottomans to the fore, as emperors, popes, and humanists tried to grapple with the most pressing threat to western Europe since, as the humanists saw it, the fifth-century barbarian invasions and the fall of Rome.<sup>5</sup> Under Suleiman the Magnificent (1494-1566), the Ottomans conquered Mamluk Syria and Egypt, Transylvania and Hungary fell, and the Turks unsuccessfully laid siege to Vienna in 1529. While the Ottomans gained little territory after 1530, their presence remained a continual reminder that the stability of Europe hung in the balance, and that as long as religious and political strife divided Europe, it would never rid itself of its Muslim nemesis.<sup>6</sup> And constant warfare with the Turks on the eastern borders and in the Mediterranean hindered Emperor Charles V's (1500-1558) abilities to end religious divisions in the Empire and provided Charles with the ultimate model of vice with which he and his allies could lump Luther and other political and religious dissenters. By the Peace of Augsburg and Charles' abdication in 1555, the Turkish threat had a part in allowing Protestantism to solidify itself. And although Protestants often held a very strong anti-Turkish stance, such as that presented in *A Christian Turn'd Turk*, Catholic leaders came to see the two as *de facto* allied forces that struck at the heart of Catholic Christendom.

The Jesuits who traveled to the Christian Orient also participated in the construction of

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500-1800* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 39.

<sup>4</sup> Eric Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, 112-129.

<sup>5</sup> Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 65-116.

<sup>6</sup> Paula S. Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration: The Habsburg Empire Confronts Islam, 1526-1850* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 21-71.

the Turk as the antithesis of true belief. Giovanni Battista Eliano and Cristóbal Rodríguez saw first-hand how the Coptic community dwindled because of conversions, and feared the worst when Patriarch Gabriel VII was nearly arrested for preventing a Coptic youth from converting to Islam. Eliano even wrote of “the danger of turning Turk” during his time in Egypt.<sup>7</sup> While turning Turk was in many ways an amorphous process of individual re-orientation with no sharp characterizations beyond apostasy and vice, it remained one of the perils that the Jesuits saw as a major threat to their efforts in the Near East. And more aware of this fact than most was Eliano; after all, his “turn,” as it were, from Judaism to Christianity was not something easily forgotten. In 1577, after having been in Rome since the failed mission to the Copts, Eliano was again presented with the problem of preventing a Christian community of the Near East from turning Turk. This time, it was the Maronites, a small sect of Catholics located predominantly in the mountains of Lebanon.

The Maronites traditionally date their origins to a fourth-century monk named Saint Maron. Their adherence to monothelism (one will of Christ) was seen as heretical by the Greek patriarch in Constantinople, and they rejected miaphysitism (one nature of Christ), which was against the views of the Syriac patriarch in Antioch.<sup>8</sup> The Greek and Syriac Churches put pressure on the Maronites to conform to these conflicting orthodoxies, which resulted in the community making overtures to Rome. By the eighth century, however, Christian persecutions and the recent Muslim conquest had relegated them to the mountains of Lebanon, and they lost direct communication with Rome. The arrival of Latin crusaders in the eleventh century changed this, as the Maronites greeted the Franks as liberators. The crusader state County of Tripoli,

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<sup>7</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 86 f. 98r.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Galadza, “Eastern Catholic Christianity,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity*, edited by Kenneth Parry (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2007), 296. Monotheletism and miaphysitism and how they were interpreted in the early Church are more complex than this, but for the ease of the reader I have simplified them.

which included Mount Lebanon, was seen as a bastion of Latin Christianity in which the Maronite community flourished.<sup>9</sup> They rekindled union with Rome, and in 1215, Patriarch Jeremiah II traveled to Rome and participated in the Fourth Lateran Council.<sup>10</sup> This period of Maronite prosperity was short-lived, however. In 1289, Tripoli fell to the Mamluks, who held it until their defeat at the hands of the Ottomans in 1516. While the persecutions they faced from the Greeks and Jacobites generally lessened under the Mamluks, the Maronites were still mostly consigned to the mountains, save small numbers in Syrian cities and on Cyprus.

While the Maronites in places such as Tripoli and Aleppo would have been a bit more affluent, though not as much as the Jewish or Greek communities were, a traveler to the mountains of Lebanon would have discovered a small, closely-knit community of Catholics, relatively poor and rustic. The community centered on a clan system built around influential families, and the Maronites worked the land in the mountain valleys as the only means of subsistence. Also, the previous centuries' events, which oscillated between heavy persecution and cautious toleration from Christians and Muslims alike, enabled their faith to become, along with their travails, a marker of confessional kinship. To be Maronite was not solely a bond found in their daily routines, but was ensconced in their belief that the community and the church were inseparable institutions.<sup>11</sup> And because of the remoteness of the Lebanese mountains, Ottoman officials after the conquest in 1517 generally left the Maronites to their own devices, allowing for general autonomy in governance. Rather than being forcefully governed by a Turkish pasha or emir as was the case in Egypt, the Maronites were guided by a patriarch who held supreme authority in all matters of communal life. His bishops were merely assistants, and it was he who

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<sup>9</sup> Kamal S. Salibi, "The Maronites of Lebanon Under Frankish and Mamluk Rule (1099-1516)," *Arabica* 4, no. 3 (September 1957): 290-293.

<sup>10</sup> Peter Galadza, "Eastern Catholic Christianity," 296.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Sami Khuri's discussion of the Maronites in the introduction to *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis, vol. I, (Palestine, Liban, Syrie, Mésopotamie, 1523-1583)*, 51-54.

delegated civil authority to the *mouqaddamin*, or Maronite landowners.<sup>12</sup> In principle, the Maronites lived as an autonomous community within the Ottoman Empire with little interference. However, that would soon change.

While the political life of the community is better known, the demography of the community itself is relatively obscure. Because of the remoteness of the community and because of its poverty and high rates of illiteracy even among the clergy, it is unclear exactly how many Maronites lived in Lebanon, or even how many villages there were. The best estimate comes from Charles Frazee, who posits that by the sixteenth century around thirty percent of the total population of Syria and Lebanon was Eastern or Oriental Christian. However this number also included the Melkite Orthodox and the Jacobite Orthodox Churches. Of the three, the Maronite church was by far the smallest. While Eliano estimated the total number to be about forty thousand, without hard numbers it is impossible to know exactly how many Maronites lived in the mountains at any given time.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, it is clear that it was small, remote community, one that, should the Ottomans desire to pressure it, would surely have no defense against it.

Sure enough, in the 1570s, the Ottomans did just that, as they began restricting the Maronites' ability to function independently. Ottoman officials in Tripoli, Damascus, and Aleppo came to see it as their prerogative to influence the daily life of the Maronite community. Matters came to a head in the fall of 1577. On 10 September, Maronite envoys arrived in Rome bearing a letter from Patriarch Mihail ar-Ruzzy. The patriarch reported that the Turks had seized monks from the patriarchal monastery after they had built a chapel without prior Turkish approval. In the letter, he lamented that the Maronite brothers were shackled and carried off like

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<sup>12</sup> Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 50-51.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 49; ASV, *AA. ARM. I-XVIII*, 1765, f. 1rv/MPOI.182-183.

common thieves.<sup>14</sup> The patriarch acknowledged that the monks had carried out the construction of the chapel without his blessing, for which he excommunicated them. However, while the patriarch punished the monks for their actions through spiritual justice, the Turks, not the patriarch, ordered the arrest. The patriarch and Gregory feared that if the Turks could restrict how the Maronites built their own chapels and churches, the community was at grave risk of falling into apostasy altogether. As a result, Cardinal Antonio Carafa, named protector of the Maronites by Gregory, wrote to the Patriarch and explained that Rome would always assist the Maronites, strengthen their bonds, and keep them in communion. And Carafa explained that the Church would do everything within its power to prevent the Turks from destroying the Maronites.<sup>15</sup> While Carafa and Gregory understood that there was little to be done to prevent the Turks from harassing the community from the outside, both men believed the best safeguard was to ensure that the Maronites remained steadfast in their beliefs and not allow heretical practices to creep into the community, eroding it from within.

The best way to ensure this, Carafa and Gregory decided, would be to send papal legates to Lebanon. And they had the perfect candidate in mind: Giovanni Battista Eliano. Because of his experience in Egypt, his theological training, and his linguistic skills, there was probably no one better able to execute the mission to the Maronites. Through doctrinal and liturgical reform,

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<sup>14</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 23r/MPOI.43. The only major work of secondary literature that covers this mission in great detail is Matti Moosa, *The Maronites in History* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 245-255. As Moosa only dedicates ten pages to this mission, his discussion is largely incomplete. The overwhelming focus of this chapter is on the doctrinal differences found between the Jesuits and the Maronites. The first leg of the mission, in which Tommaso Raggio accompanied Eliano, is largely ignored, as are the political climate of the Ottoman Empire, Eliano's previous experiences in the Christian Orient, and the mounting tensions between the Maronites and other Christian groups in the area. Likewise, other scholarship has treated this mission only sparingly. Bernard Heyberger's monumental *Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la réforme catholique: Syrie, Liban, Palestine, XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles* (Rome: Ecole française de Rome, 1994) gives only scant detail, as it focuses overwhelmingly on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The same is true of Frazee's *Catholics and Sultans*. Because of the nature of Frazee's work, focusing on Catholics in the Ottoman world over nearly five centuries, he only gives this mission a little more than a page.

<sup>15</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 28r/MPOI.60. "pur V.S. resti sicura che il Papa non le mancherà mai d'aiutarla in qualche potrà compitamente, sempre che starete fermi nelle Fede Cattolica e nell'obedientia della Sta. Chiesa."



Eliano was to safeguard the Maronites' Catholic beliefs and ensure that they did not stray toward the cruel charm of the Turk. In part, this chapter traces that story; it tells how, from 1578 to 1582, Eliano tirelessly worked to prevent a cultural and religious degeneration into apostasy. But, as Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turk* has shown, indigenous communities of the Near East like the Maronites were not the only potential victims of the "tretcheries, seducing tretcheries." The Jesuits themselves could fall prey to the appeal of the Turk. That is also part of this story: it would be Eliano's companion on the first leg of the mission (1578-1579), Tommaso Raggio, who was accused of neglecting the mission and suspected of abandoning much more.

Born in Forlì in 1531, Raggio was erudite and passionate, having held important posts in Loreto, Siena, Sicily, and Tivoli. Raggio was a well-respected and learned member of the Society, but Father General Mercurian's selection of Raggio for this mission was an odd one indeed. In addition to having never been to the Levant, he knew no Arabic. It was all the more surprising when Mercurian named Raggio the superior of the mission.<sup>16</sup> But the selection of Raggio over Eliano is partly clarified when one considers Mercurian's negative stance on *conversos* and converts in the Society. So, despite his skill set, Eliano was passed up in favor of a man with no experience but with pure Catholic blood; it was a slight that Eliano never forgot. It irked and troubled Eliano, as he was stuck with a superior he resented. And, as Eliano soon found out, he neither trusted nor liked Raggio.

Raggio was headstrong, with quite the ego. Rather than deferring to Eliano and heeding his advice concerning how to proceed on the mission, not to mention listening to the directives of Mercurian and others, Raggio desired to preach to whomever would listen, even if that included Greeks and Turks. Eliano knew first-hand that any attempt to denigrate Islam would be grounds

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<sup>16</sup> The only readily accessible biography that I have been able to locate for Tommaso Raggio is in French, and can be found in the appendix of Sami Khuri, ed., *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis, vol. 1, (Palestine, Liban, Syrie, Mésopotamie, 1523-1583)*, 463.

for immediate arrest, perhaps worse; converting Turks was off the table. Raggio refused to listen to that, as well. And Eliano's experiences in Egypt years prior had taught him that Greeks, if forced to choose, would much rather "become Turks" than convert to Catholicism.<sup>17</sup> But, from Eliano's perspective, Raggio did not seem to care. His inability to perceive these cultural and religious forces and their potential impact on the mission caused a major rift. More importantly, the combination of Raggio's diffidence and his efforts to assimilate himself seamlessly into the Ottoman world suggested to some that Raggio may have inadvertently crossed a cultural barrier. Raggio may have moved away from his Catholic identity into the realm of the irreconcilable Other; Raggio may have turned Turk.

### **The beginnings of the mission**

The push for a mission to the Maronites began with the papal audience granted to two Maronites, Bishop Georges and Archpriest Qlimos.<sup>18</sup> Transcribed by Eliano, the audience was Gregory XIII's first official declaration to help the Maronites against their external and internal threats. After Georges thanked Gregory for his favors and care, the pontiff blessed the two Maronites and granted them a plenary indulgence. He then explained his desire to send Eliano and a companion to observe their rites to assess how to assist the Maronites. Gregory also promised that he personally would see to it that the Maronites remain safe from persecution and slavery.<sup>19</sup> The audience on the whole was very positive; the pope warmly received Georges and

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<sup>17</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 86 f. 156v-157r/MPOIL.305. "Li Greci sono si ostinati nelle loro heresie et odio della Chiesa Romana che più presto come essi dicevano, volevano diventar Turchi che sottoporsi all'obedientia della Santa Chiesa Romana."

<sup>18</sup> Qlimos was often Latinized as Clement in the Jesuits' correspondences with Mercurian, Carafa, and Gregory.

<sup>19</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 II*, f. 26rv/MPOI.57-59.

Qlimos after their due submission to his authority. And the envoys received the promises of security and aid that the patriarch had hoped they would procure on his behalf.

Soon after the audience, in February 1578, Gregory kept his promise to the Maronites when he promulgated two important papal bulls. First was the bull *Benedictus Deus*. In it, Gregory explained to Patriarch Mihail that he had received his envoys and warmly welcomed their profession of faith. More pressing were the doctrinal matters that the bull called for the patriarch to address. The first was the Trisagion, a prayer dedicated to the Holy Trinity. The problem was that, as Gregory saw it, the Maronites were saying a heretical version of the prayer that included the phrase “who was born for us; who was crucified for us; who rose up and ascended into heaven for us.” Gregory explained to Mihail that to say that the Trinity was crucified was heresy, as “neither the Trinity was crucified, nor the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, but only Jesus Christ the Only-Begotten son of God.”<sup>20</sup> After this, Gregory explained the necessity of a bishop performing the Sacrament of Confirmation, diligence in ensuring youths were instructed in the gravity of the Eucharist, and the importance of confession for the safeguarding of the Maronites’ souls. Gregory also wrote that the decrees of the Council of Trent would be translated into Arabic in order that the patriarch could more readily implement them. Gregory also sent along his words of encouragement given the plight of the community in the face of recent tribulations.<sup>21</sup> Of course, promulgating these liturgical reforms to the patriarch would only go so far. It was in the next bull, *Semper Judicavimus*, that Gregory announced the dispatch of Eliano and Raggio to Lebanon. Gregory reiterated the theological themes he addressed in *Benedictus Deus* and explained that through apostolic tradition and the decrees of

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<sup>20</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 II*, f. 29v/MPOL.51-52. “Haec quoniam haeresim Petri Cnaphaei Antiocheni damnatam in Quinto Synodo Constantinopolitana sapiant, ne Trinitas crucifixa, neque Pater, neque Spiritus Sanctus, sed solum Jesus Christus filius Dei Unigenitus...”

<sup>21</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 II*, f. 29v-31r.

the councils, Rome was the head of the true faith that had never been corrupted by heresy.<sup>22</sup> As a result, Gregory explained, it was beyond necessary to send Eliano and Raggio, two of the sharpest and brightest theologians, in order to ensure that the Maronites remain within the fold of the mother Church.<sup>23</sup> Gregory had little doubt that the legates would instruct the Maronites, guaranteeing that they would not succumb to the weight of Turkish threats.

Cardinal Carafa had similar hopes. In late February, he wrote to Mihail expressing his satisfaction with the papal audience and the profession of faith. He also praised the envoys for their devotion and obedience to the pontiff and to the Church as a whole.<sup>24</sup> He then implored the patriarch to observe *Benedictus Deus* and *Semper Judicavimus*, and any bulls that might follow, as they demonstrated nothing but the integrity of the faith and the truth of the Church. After another brief reminder that the Maronites should take to heart all papal bulls, specifically those of Innocent III (1198-1215), Carafa gave his closing salutations and anticipated nothing short of the complete eradication of the errors that had stricken the Maronites.<sup>25</sup>

The next order of business for Carafa and Gregory, before Raggio and Eliano could leave for Lebanon, was to decide exactly how the legates would proceed on the mission. Because the Maronites were “simple, poor and uneducated, but pious and devoted to the Holy Apostolic

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<sup>22</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 II*, f. 24r/MPOI.55-56. “Hanc vero fidem Christi primum doctrina et sanguine sancitam, tum ab Apostolis per totum orbem diffusam, caritate deinde auctam, vetustate firmatam, et roboratam, ad extremum, Sanctorum Patrum, Oecumenicorum conciliorum decretis planissime explicatam, usque a Petro Apostolorum Principe, continuata per omnes Pontifices successione certum est, semper inviolatam retinuisse Romanam Ecclesiam, neque se ullius unquam haeresis laba contaminari passam fuisse.”

<sup>23</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 II*, f. 24v/MPOI.56. “Nunc vero volumus vos consolari per dilectos filios Thoman Regium et Baptistam Elianum, sacerdotes (ordinis jesuitarum) quos mittimus, viros optimos, multisque in rebus probatissimos, et christianae charitatis plenos, ex quibus certissime cognoscetis omnia, quae ad fidei catholicae sinceritatem, divinorumque, et Sanctae Matris Ecclesiae mandatorum observantiam pertinebunt.”

<sup>24</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 II*, f. 28r/MPOI.59-60. “Infinito contento c’ha dato le lettere sue con la presentia di Mons. Vescovo Giorgio e dell’Arciprete Clemente per haver nuova di lei, et haver veduta la devotione et obediencia, che porta à a questa Sta Sede veri effete della conservatione della Fede Cattolica che tiene, qual’ non si puote, nè osservare nè obedire se non da quelli che sono membri de Christo N.S., Sposo e Capo di questa Sta Chiesa.”

<sup>25</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 II*, f. 28b/MPOI.63. “N. Sre le scrive in longo, consolandola nel Signor Iddio nelle sue tribulationi, dal quale le prego gratia di sopportarle con patientia, et insieme con allegrezze, essendone esso solo il datore.”

See,” Carafa felt it best to show them loving benevolence coupled with sternness that stressed the gravity of the threat to their souls. Carafa wanted the legates to see, despite the patriarch’s profession of faith, just how Catholic the Maronites were in practice. Carafa wanted the pair, when noting and attempting to correct the Maronites’ errors, to explain “with every pleasantness the doctrine of the Holy Church” and to praise the Maronites for their efforts.<sup>26</sup> Carafa feared that too much pressure to conform to seemingly foreign practices would alienate them, driving them even further away than they already were. Carafa also ordered the pair to fix errors in Maronite bibles and books, to look for abuses and errors in the administration of the Sacraments, and to focus on the unity of Christian brotherhood. The most important order of business, much as it had been with the Copts in the 1560s, was to ensure that the Maronites rendered obedience to Rome after each successful conclave.<sup>27</sup> Carafa concluded by imploring the pair to use sagacity and dexterity in their efforts to reincorporate the Maronites into the Church, and to stress that the Maronites should see themselves as deeply obedient and loving sons and daughters whose father sought to protect them from heresy and error. He wished the pair luck and prayed for the success of the mission.<sup>28</sup> With these directives in hand, Eliano and Raggio confidently set off for Lebanon in March 1578, accompanied by a third Jesuit, the Sicilian Mario Amato.<sup>29</sup>

### **Raggio the Turk?**

Eliano, Raggio, and Amato arrived in Tripoli in mid-June 1578 after a smooth two months’ sail. Eliano was happy to report that they were pleased to be on land, and that their

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<sup>26</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, 33rv/MPOI.64-65. “Ma con tutto ciò non mancaranno di adottrinarli in tutto quel’che potranno capire e vorranno ricevere, esplicandole con ogn’piacevolezza la dottrina di Santa Chiesa; e sopra tutto avvertiscano di non sconciare quell tanto di buono ch’apresso di loro ritroveranno, mà più tosto lo fomentino et accreschino con approvarlo et lodarlo.”

<sup>27</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 33v-34r/MPOI.63-67.

<sup>28</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 34r/MPOI.65-66.

<sup>29</sup> Amato later accompanied Eliano to Egypt. Cf. Chapter Three.

Maronite companions were especially glad to be home. He explained to Carafa that they understood the directions they were given, and sought to carry them through diligently. In this first letter, Eliano also illuminated one of the gravest issues that would continue to plague them. In his effort to communicate with the Maronites through Bishop Georges, Eliano learned that he and many other bishops could not read or write Arabic script. While Eliano attempted to be positive, and explained that Georges desired to learn Arabic, the minimal knowledge of Arabic among the Maronite leaders meant that Eliano would have to put a concerted effort into teaching them to read before questions of textual accuracy could even be addressed.<sup>30</sup> Eliano was certainly up for the task; but it would be time consuming and would leave him little time for much else. This meant that a good deal of the spiritual work would fall on Raggio and Amato.

The good news was that the Jesuits found the Maronites “universally confessing to be ignorant (as in effect they are), and that they desire to be taught as disciples,” which “gives us great satisfaction and much hope.”<sup>31</sup> Eliano was further impressed by how they lived and worshipped God like the seven thousand Jews who never knelt before Baal, a reference to 1 Kings 19:18, demonstrating their zeal and perseverance.<sup>32</sup> Eliano’s choice to use this scriptural reference is particularly significant, as the Jews were led by the prophet Elijah in their resistance against Baal. As Elijah was Eliano’s given name at birth, in a certain sense Eliano was making himself into a sixteenth-century Elijah, come to defend the Maronites against the Muslims. And Eliano illuminated just how grave matters were, and just how essential his presence was: they were in danger of falling into apostasy, sure; but turning Turk was hardly the only fear. The

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<sup>30</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106 f. 211r/MPOI.69. “Anzi giudicamo che sarà necessario affinché tutti li altri possano servirsi dele cose arabice, principalmente dovendosi stampar in essa lingua diverse cose, che io mi affatichi ad insegnare molti altri questa lingua, perché nissuno la sa leggere et indarno ci faticariao se non la sepessero.”

<sup>31</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 115r/MPOI.75. “confessando tutti universalmente di esser ignoranti (come in effetto sono), et che desiderano di esser insegnati come discepoli. il che ci da gran satisfatione et molta speranza.” This is reference to 1 Kings 19:18.

<sup>32</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 115v/MPOI.77. “Dio si habbi riserbato septem milia qui non curvaverunt genua sua ante Baal.”

threats were numerous, including “persecutions and appeals of the Greeks, or Jacobites, or Copts, or Armenians, or Nestorians, all of whom hate them and torment them only because they show obedience to the Roman See.”<sup>33</sup> Lest the Maronites fall into one of these many possible apostasies, Eliano planned to translate a Bible for them and purge errors from their other books. Eliano ascribed these errors to poor translations and the use of “Jacobite books.” The Patriarch did deny the errors, and reaffirmed faith and loyalty to Rome.<sup>34</sup> But the situation was quite dire, as the protection of the Maronite nation would take much energy, and they needed to be defended from the seemingly countless groups seeking their demise.

While there was plenty of work to be done for all three Jesuits, especially Eliano’s work with language and literacy, it seemed that everything was going well. There would be challenges, but they remained positive and seemed to be working well toward a common goal. Even though the Jesuits saw how the Maronites observed “the Greek rite like all the other eastern peoples,” and perhaps in some instances still maintained their monothelistic views, the legates were confident that the Maronites would “approach the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church, and totally embrace its traditions and rites.”<sup>35</sup> However, this collective endeavor to save the Maronites from their troubles unraveled within weeks of their arrival. It quickly became apparent that the Jesuits were not all in agreement concerning how the mission should be carried out, as Eliano and Amato felt that Raggio’s vision for how to proceed differed from Carafa and

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<sup>33</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 115v/MPOI.77. “Sarà necessario di tratenersi qui, non dico un anno, ma forse più anni, ò almeno esser visitati al spesso, perché questa novella pianta non venghi a seccarsi con il calor delle persecuzioni et impugnazioni deli greci, ò jacobiti, ò cophti, ò nestoriani, quali tutti li odiano et li travagliano solo perché rendono obedientia alla Sede Romana.”

<sup>34</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 116r/MPOI.78-79.

<sup>35</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 145r/MPOI.98. “Che essendo stato il popolo de Maroniti, con i sui capi, ab antiquis temporibus osservatore del rito greco, commune a tutti gli altri popoli orientali, et accostatosi almanco in gran parte a loro falsi dogmi, è da credere che sempre li sia stato et sarà, per essere molto difficile il lasciarli del tutto, et accostarsi a dogmi de la Chiesa Cattolica Romana, et abbracciare totalmente le sue traditioni et riti.” The Jesuits’ view that all Eastern Churches observe the Greek Rite is obviously inaccurate. Eliano knew this distinction; as this letter was not in his hand, it is questionable how much of a say he had in its tone and content.

Gregory's. Eliano wrote to Mercurian that despite being the superior of a mission dedicated to helping the Maronites, Raggio "does not have this mission at heart," and derided him for desiring to work in Constantinople. He even claimed that Raggio "never does anything here" and "attends to nothing but his own comforts."<sup>36</sup> And Eliano was particularly angered by Raggio's view that the mission to the Maronites was "not the principal, but an accessory and that the principal was to Constantinople." Eliano's vilification of Raggio continued when he explained that Raggio told him that Eliano's only role on the mission was to be an interpreter and translator of texts, and that once he had finished these tasks he could return to Rome.<sup>37</sup>

Mario Amato agreed with Eliano. He wrote to Mercurian that Raggio wanted to go to Constantinople and abandon the mission; he also supported Eliano's claim that Raggio called him nothing but an interpreter.<sup>38</sup> Eliano and Amato believed that the mission was quite important and that "these poor souls" needed the Jesuits in the face of threats from heretical Christians and infidel Turks. If the Jesuits were not present to help the Maronites, who openly and willingly cooperated, they would surely fall to the Turks. The patriarch and his prelates were going to put into place "everything that we wish" in regards to religious orthodoxy, and the patriarch had just received a memorial from Eliano, in Arabic, outlining some of the main themes addressed in *Benedictus Deus*, which the patriarch was more than willing to implement.<sup>39</sup> So Eliano and Amato could not grasp why Raggio would abandon the Maronites in their current situation to work with the very groups threatening their existence. Seemingly at his wits' end, Eliano

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<sup>36</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 114r/MPOI.72-73.

<sup>37</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 119r/MPOI.82. "Ma l'altro giono, ad un certo proposito, ha detto che questa Missione deli Maroniti non era la principale, ma accessoria et che la principale era quella di Constantinopoli... et che io non havevo che far altro in questa Missione che esserli interprete, ma a lui toccava far et disporre di ogni cosa, et che io havevo finito quello che toccava a me et mi potevo andar a Roma."

<sup>38</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 117r/MPOI.80. "La causa è questa, che il P. Tomase pretende de volere andare in Constantenopole [sic] et lassare questa impresa imperfetta, dicendo che qua non se ferrà mai nulla; et il P. Battista come dice alcuna cosa, le dice che lui non è nulla in questa Missione et che è venuto per interprete."

<sup>39</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 I*, f. 634rv/MPOI.84-87.



explained to Mercurian that if no resolution came concerning his relationship with Raggio, it perhaps would be best for him to return home.<sup>40</sup> Eliano did write to Mercurian on 30 July, expressing his regret of the situation with Raggio, and asked Mercurian to pray for him and the mission. But the three envoys were at an impasse; Eliano and Amato were troubled by Raggio's refusal to assist the Maronites, and Raggio felt the mission was a futile effort. By the end of July, Eliano and Raggio were not speaking, only communicating through Giovanni Battista Regolo, the Venetian vice-consul in Tripoli.<sup>41</sup>

Raggio's own letters suggest the boorishness Eliano decried. In his descriptions of the Maronites, Raggio was abrasive and aggressive, more so than Eliano believed was necessary. In a letter to Cardinal Carafa, Raggio explained that the Maronites refused to share, or at least denied owning, many books. The Patriarch also asked that the Jesuits not stay at the monastery, lest the Turks become suspicious. Raggio was not pleased by this, and suggested that the Maronites were not as willing to work with them as originally believed.<sup>42</sup> Raggio also sent off his take on the dispute with Eliano, explaining to Mercurian that he and Eliano disagreed on how to proceed, and that as the superior he should have the final say. Raggio lambasted Eliano by expressing concern over whether or not Eliano was doing anything useful, again suggesting his view that Eliano's only role was the interpreter. And beyond that he felt Eliano was of little help to the mission.<sup>43</sup> He also explained to Mercurian that he had been staying with the Franciscan community in Tripoli. And while Eliano spent the winter of 1578/1579 translating an Arabic bible, Raggio decided to go to Aleppo with the new Venetian consul to see what benefits would

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<sup>40</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 119r/MPOI.82.

<sup>41</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 126rv/MPOI.102. "Dopo questo il P. Thomaso non mi ha parlato né detto cosa alcuna de quelle che ha fatto con l'Signor Regolo, finche io di novo andasse dal Signor Regolo per informarmi del tutto."

<sup>42</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 124rv/MPOI.94-95.

<sup>43</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 118r/MPOI.92-93. "Credo che si da avertire ne dicamus scribendo pugnancia inter se, non ostante ch'io havessi comunicato con esso lui ogni cosa che spetta alla Missione, non dimeno ha voluto spedire qualche cosa ne videatur omnino inutilis."

come of it, and even suggested that he might go to Galata to preach should it seem the best route to take.<sup>44</sup>

This was how things remained throughout the rest of the summer, and little had changed by October. Eliano begrudgingly reported on 16 October that Raggio was continually studying Turkish in preparation for his planned departure for Constantinople. He was frustrated that Raggio refused to instruct the Maronites in the basic tenets of the faith while Eliano worked on translating texts into Arabic, such as the catechism of Peter Canisius and Diego de Ledesma's *Christian Doctrine*. Eliano believed that these texts could greatly benefit the Maronites, as they would provide them with the basic tools to preserve their community. However, if Raggio did nothing and Eliano had to teach catechism and work on texts, both instruction and translation would suffer. But Raggio refused to help, feeling that Eliano's work was all a waste of time and money, and he dedicated himself to learning a language, as Eliano believed, that was only useful if one were to work among heretics and infidels.<sup>45</sup> If Raggio was to work with the Latin Christians of Constantinople, as he suggested, Italian or French would suffice; Eliano certainly did not believe Raggio's story about consoling Catholics in Galata. And to make matters worse, Eliano had to explain that, in addition to being uncooperative in the operations of the mission, Raggio had not proven himself diligent in ensuring their money was well spent, and more money was required for their daily subsistence.<sup>46</sup>

Despite his issues with Raggio, Eliano continued to work with the Maronites. He believed that he would try to spend much of October visiting the patriarch and his bishops. Most importantly, he wanted to visit many of the nearly two hundred Maronite villages, many of

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<sup>44</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106 f. 121r/MPOI.91. "...potevo passare per Constantinopoli, se questa Missione fosse del tutto finita, cioè, se io potessi imbarcare qui i Compagni per Italia, et io appresso me n'andasse per terra, ò almeno fossero per partirsi un mese ò doi dipoi ch'io fossi andato."

<sup>45</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* N.N. 86 f. 221r/MPOI.106-107.

<sup>46</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* N.N. 86, f. 221v/MPOI.108.

which were without resident priests, relying solely on itinerant pastoral care.<sup>47</sup> And Eliano's letters from October 1578 are quite weighty as well, demonstrating that the community faced internal and external forces beyond their relative ignorance of the faith. On 25 October, he wrote to Mercurian lamenting the recent seizure of a Maronite priest by the Turks. Fear of enslavement was a contributing factor in elective conversion to Islam, and Eliano believed that the community was in direct danger of disintegrating as a result of these abductions.<sup>48</sup> Additionally, despite the Patriarch's desire to express his good will and cooperation with reforming the community, internal divisions within the Maronite community plagued Eliano's efforts. While the patriarch had called him to the monastery at Qannubin, Eliano was forced to return to Tripoli abruptly, and was saddened that he had to remain there for some time, as Maronite factions engaged in violent conflicts, "robbing, despoiling, and killing everyone that they found."<sup>49</sup>

Setbacks with the Maronites were compounded by Eliano's continual troubles with Raggio, who had almost completely distanced himself from the mission. When Eliano set off for the mountain villages in order to preach and ensure that Maronite priests were properly administering the Sacraments to their flocks, Raggio simply refused to go along, preferring to stay behind in Tripoli to study Turkish.<sup>50</sup> And Raggio further agitated Eliano when he explained that working with the Maronites was pointless and that it would be better to let it be and do something more fruitful, namely go to Constantinople. But most frustrating of all for Eliano was how much Raggio focused on learning Turkish. Eliano could not believe that he spent all his

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<sup>47</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 130r/MPOI.111. "Poi bisognerà andar di novo a visitar il Patriarca, li suoi Vescovi et anco, come ci ha dato intentione, di visitar tutta la natione, che sono apresso 200 ville et terre, et vivono come pecorelle senza pastore, separati dalla fede de tutte le nationi et desiderosi di obedir alla Sede Romana."

<sup>48</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* N.N. 86 f. 223r/MPOI.114.

<sup>49</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 133r/MPOI.116. "Et già volevamo mettersi in viaggio per Monte Libano, ma siamo stati impediti et forse saremo anco impediti per qualche mesi di andarvi, per certe fattioni di duoi sette di popoli che stanno in arme per certe lor pretensioni, quali robbano, spgliano et amazanno tutti quelli che trovano, et così ci firmaremo fin che venghi miglior occasione."

<sup>50</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f.135r/MPOI.121.

time “writing, copying, transferring all things Turkish in order to learn it, and does not a thing for the benefit of this mission.” Eliano explained it would be better if he were the mission’s superior, or if Raggio returned home and left him and Amato to carry out their missionary objectives, as it appeared Raggio was only a burden to the mission.<sup>51</sup> As Eliano and Amato already had enough problems, they hardly needed one of their own undermining their efforts.

By November 1578, others began lodging complaints. Patriarch Mihail wrote to Mercurian that, while Eliano’s presence was welcomed and his care for “the health of our souls” was appreciated, Raggio had hardly helped them at all. He explained: “we know that he did not have the desire to remain in this country, since he does not know our language and he plans to go to Istanbul, as he has told us numerous times.”<sup>52</sup> And Fra Bernardino da Basilicata, a Franciscan, wrote to Mercurian that many merchants were scandalized by Raggio’s deeds and poor actions. He explained how Raggio preferred to stay indoors and do very little work. And his behavior was allegedly abhorrent when Eliano was away at Mount Lebanon. The friar shockingly wrote that when he asked exactly what it was Raggio sought to do in Tripoli, “[Raggio] replied to me that if I did not remain quiet he would give me fifty lashings to my ass, as if I were some delinquent.”<sup>53</sup> A troubling accusation, indeed. These charges pointed in a dangerous direction. By seeing Raggio long for Constantinople, study Turkish, and sit idly by as Eliano and Amato labored on the Maronites’ behalf, Europeans and Maronites alike articulated anxieties concerning Raggio’s abandonment of Catholic cultural norms. His attachment to sloth and his own comforts,

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<sup>51</sup> ARSI., *Gall.* 106, f. 133r/MPOI.117. “Il quale tutto è posto nel imparar la lingua turchesca, scrivendo, copiando, transferendo alcune cose turchesce per impararla, et per conto di questa Missione non fa cosa alcuna, et questo dico coram Deo Quia non metior. V.P. sarà contento di cambiarmelo, overo di farlo ritornar, lasciandomi qui con Maro, se però così giudicarà che restiamo, perché spero che farò tanto o più senza di lei che con esso.”

<sup>52</sup> MPOI.138. “car nous savons qu’il n’avait pas le désir de demeurer dans ce pays, vu qu’il ne connaît pas notre langue et qu’il projetait d’aller à Istanbul, comme il nous l’a dit de nombreuses fois.” This letter, inventoried as ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 40rv., was written in Arabic with Syriac script. The translation into French is by Sami Khuri.

<sup>53</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106 f.137r-138v/MPOI.125. “Et lui mi ripose che si io non stava quieto mi volia fare dar’ quinquanta staffulati al culo, come si io fossi qualche dilynquente.”

threats of violence against Christians, fascination with the Turkish language, and desire to go the morally corrupt Constantinople were seen as being all grounded in non-Catholic cultural vices. Raggio might have gone the way of Captain Jack Ward; he could have potentially discarded his Christian identity in favor of the languid debauchery of the infidel.<sup>54</sup> And if one of the Jesuit missionaries had succumbed to the vices of the Turk, the mission could only contribute to the Maronites turning Turk as well.

Despite his misgivings, Mercurian eventually sided with Eliano. Eliano's expertise trumped Raggio's position as the mission's superior. In October 1578, he ordered the three to put aside their differences, explaining that their disagreement with how to handle the mission had done nothing for building peace and union between Rome and the Maronites. As this was the principal goal of the mission, he reiterated that they should work together for the benefit of the Maronites, defending and preserving the Maronites' Catholic identity above anything else.<sup>55</sup> But when the accusations against Raggio from non-Jesuits arrived in Rome, Mercurian began to wonder whether Raggio's place in the mission should be reconsidered. Raggio had alienated everyone involved in the mission; and when it was clear that he had lost the support of Mercurian, Mihail, Carafa, and Eliano, Raggio had no choice but to give up his plan to go to Constantinople. He explained to Mercurian on 25 November that he no longer wanted to go to

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<sup>54</sup> Eric Dursteler, "Education and identity in Constantinople's Latin Rite community, c. 1600," *Renaissance Studies* 18, no. 2 (2004), 288. Dursteler explains that "the danger of Constantinople was its diversity, the opportunities it presented for vice, and most perilous of all, the potential of religious metamorphosis, most evident in the many renegades in the city, who both fascinated and frightened Christendom." Thus, Raggio's desire to go to Constantinople could be about converting the infidel, but without the proper structures around him, he could easily succumb to the pressures of the soft, corrupt morality of the city.

<sup>55</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 128r/MPOI.104. "E quantunque ci siamo rallegrati grandemente nel Signore della gratia che sua divina Maestà gli ha fatta in condurli sani e salvi al luoco destinato di lor Missione, pure habbiamo havuto qualche dispiacere, intendendo che non habbino sodisfatto così compitamente all'intento di detto viaggio, come si desiderava, né servata tra loro quella unione e pace che con parole et scritti gl'havevamo qui tanto inculcata."

Constantinople to work among “those Greeks.”<sup>56</sup> And on 31 December, he recognized his companions’ disgust with him and desired to stay and help the Maronites, acknowledging that there was plenty of work to be done. But despite Raggio’s about-face concerning the mission, the legates were back in Venice by May 1579, accompanied by two Maronite youths to be instructed in Rome.<sup>57</sup> Eliano was happy to report that he had almost finished an Arabic bible to be sent to Rome for imprinting. He also believed that, in addition to those in Lebanon, the Maronite community in Cyprus was in grave need of help given the island’s recent fall to the Turks.<sup>58</sup> Eliano also believed that there was still much to be done with texts, and was pleased to learn of a rumor that there was an Arabic bible kept in a monastery two days’ journey from Tripoli. That text, if it existed, would have to wait for Eliano’s return a year later.<sup>59</sup>

But there is still the issue of Raggio’s decision, after months of staunch resistance, to give up his desires to head off to Constantinople. It is telling that it took outright anger on the part of everyone involved for Raggio to understand the difficulties of the mission. But even then, it was clear that Raggio did not fully grasp the larger ramifications of his actions and the threat he posed. When he wrote to Mercurian explaining he no longer sought to work with “those Greeks,” Raggio admitted to undermining the mission by desiring to work with one of the nations seeking to destroy the Maronites. But on 25 July, Raggio had written he would work among “i christiani franchi” – Catholics. His inability to see why working with one group over the other was problematic, even after he agreed to stay in Tripoli, shows a certain lack of awareness

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<sup>56</sup> ARSI, *Fondo Gesuitico* 650a 464/42/MPOI.132. “Per la sudetta mia scritta per via di Venetia, et anco per un’altra scritta primo un giovane tedesco che mi disse se ne veniva costà, haveva inteso V.P. che non andai altrimenti à sodisfare alla divotione di quei greci di Gallata, come ne haveva scritto a V.P. me per piu rispetti l’ho lasciato...”

<sup>57</sup> ARSI, *Epp. N.N.* 86, f. 271rv/MPOI.164-165.

<sup>58</sup> ARSI, *Fondo Gesuitico* 650a, *Epistolae selectae* 8/488, f. 1r/MPOI.133-134.

<sup>59</sup> ARSI, *Epp. N.N.* 86, f. 224r/MPOI.169. “Et havendo notitia di una antichissima bibia in Arabico che era in un Monasterio lontano da Tripoli de duoi ò 3 giornate, et desideroso de haverla per cnperirla con questa et con la vulgata, accio più correttamente si stampi, ma non havendo ordine di far nova spesa per far copiar anco quella santa Scrittura, con la sua gran liberalità et amorevolezza si è offerto fine sene serva...”

concerning the sectarian tribulations the mission faced. Such ignorance of confessional dynamics almost completely destroyed the mission. Moreover, their final report of the mission, written in July 1579, clearly delineates exactly why Raggio's actions were so problematic. While no mention is made of their disagreement, how they described the Maronites shows that there was still much work to be done if the community was to be protected from their Turkish masters and their Christian enemies. They were pleased to announce that the Maronites on the whole recognized Gregory as the head of the Church. But their books, rites, and liturgies were still full of errors. They also feared that as long as the forty thousand Maronites were guided by "poor and ignorant" bishops and monks with poor discipline, the community, along with even the most religious of the Maronites, was on the verge of confessional collapse. They did not think it would take much for them to be lost altogether; it would only be through returning to Lebanon relatively soon that the community could be preserved.<sup>60</sup>

Before getting to that, though, the question remains: why was Raggio so preoccupied with going to Constantinople? And why was Raggio learning Turkish? This deeply troubled Carafa, Eliano, Mihail, and Mercurian. The documentary evidence only explains that these were his wishes, not why. And these questions will probably never fully be answered. After all, he was never accused outright of turning Turk, not by Eliano, not by anyone. Even Fra Bernardino never volleyed such an accusation, and he certainly had been on the receiving end of Raggio's most vitriolic mood swings. However, turning Turk, as this chapter's epigraph suggests, was often grounded in ignorance and trickery. The trajectory of Eliano's life, from grandson of a famed Hebrew scholar to Jesuit priest, meant that he was constantly preoccupied with ensuring that his own Catholic identity was secure and that the duplicitous Turkish Other never ensnare him. But Raggio was an Italian Catholic with no previous experience in the Ottoman Empire, and he

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<sup>60</sup> ASV, *AA. ARM. I-XVIII*, 1765, f. 1rv/MPOI.182-183.

simply did not grasp the fluidity of identity that Eliano not only understood, but also had experienced through his own conversion and acts of self-confessionalization. Raggio's inability to see how his actions threatened the mission and how others saw his actions shows how inexperienced he was when it came to cultural transgression. This irked Eliano because he believed his understanding of cultural transgression and his abandonment of one cultural group for another meant that he should have been the superior of the mission. If Raggio and Eliano had shared similar cultural experiences, Raggio would have recognized the porous barriers between groups and would have seen immersion in a foreign culture as threatening, rather than buttressing, the stability of early modern Catholicism in the Ottoman Empire. But Raggio's ignorance of cultural dynamics in the Near East and how misinterpreting them could threaten the Maronites meant that he simply did not imagine that *he* could become a threat to the mission itself.

Had Raggio "gone Turk?" Probably not. He eventually returned to Italy and carried out a seemingly successful career in the Society until his death in 1599. But because Raggio's Catholicness was never questioned before his arrival in the Levant (he was after all born Catholic and never left one faith for another), it never occurred to him that his actions could lead to cultural doubt; for him the act of self-confessionalization was a given and never had to be an active part of his daily life. The idea that he *could* turn Turk was simply never a possibility for him. But on this mission, context was everything. Because Raggio did not understand his surroundings, he failed to comprehend how his actions would impact not just the viability of the mission but Rome's confidence in the missionaries themselves. Eliano's anxiety concerning the permeable fringes of Catholic identity and Raggio's ignorance of them stand in stark contrast.



Such a high level of dissonance between the pair, not to mention the reciprocal antagonism they clearly shared, is central to unlocking the true nature of the dispute.

But regardless of what his intentions actually were, the possibility of turning Turk meant that Raggio's actions were heavily scrutinized. The religious fluidity that could entangle anyone captures the essence of cultural dynamics and confessional politics in the Levant. Eliano saw the permeability of religious confession as a major fault line of cultural uncertainty, a place where one's intentions and allegiances become fuzzy. Consequently, Eliano viewed Raggio's desires to work with Turks and Greeks as a grave transgression. Raggio's actions were contrary to the goals of the mission, and Eliano was angered by his supposed partner's actions that were an affront to Catholic identity. And Eliano made it known that Raggio's desire to work with Greeks and Turks potentially threatened the Maronites. Most likely, "the danger of turning Turk" had not caught up with Raggio. Chances are, Raggio had no urge to leave the Catholic faith. His desire to preach to Turks and Greeks reflected his belief that he was a dedicated and earnest missionary ready to preach to the infidel, or die in the name of Christ. While Eliano was acutely aware of this martyr-missionary narrative, the pragmatics of missionary activity in the Christian Orient superseded such eagerness. When the pair arrived in Rome, it was clear that Eliano would return to Lebanon within months to continue the mission to the Maronites; Raggio would be reassigned. Mercurian, Carafa, and Gregory could not afford another internal rift undermining their efforts to safeguard the confessional identity of the Maronites.

### **Unfinished business: Eliano's return to Lebanon**

Eliano's stay in Rome was very brief, less than a year. He had little time to rest, as the planning for the synod to be held in Lebanon began nearly as soon as he arrived in Rome. On 1

January 1580, Eliano wrote to Patriarch Mihail that he had not forgotten the Maronites or his promises to the community, and that he hoped to return to Lebanon by May. He explained that he was still working with Maronite books, and he would bring the community much-needed vessels, ornaments, vestments, and other sacred instruments that the Maronite communities lacked. Eliano then confidently wrote that he would achieve everything that he began in 1578, and promised that the abortion of the mission just months prior was not a reflection of his or Rome's commitment, but was solely the product of circumstance.<sup>61</sup> And so, Eliano began the final preparations for his departure from Rome. The exact date of Eliano's departure for Lebanon is unclear, but it was most likely mid-May 1580, as the only clue comes on 7 May with the papal bull *Ex Litteris Tuis*, in which Gregory officially announced the imminent departure of Eliano with his companion Giovanni Bruno.<sup>62</sup>

Giovanni Bruno (1544-1623), born in Colonella, a small seaside commune on the border of Abruzzo and Le Marche, entered the Society in 1570. As he was a respected theologian and professor of logic at the Collegio Romano (though he knew no Arabic), Mercurian chose him to accompany Eliano to assist in the crafting of an Arabic Christian doctrine and the convention of a synod. While he and Eliano clashed on occasion, it never reached the level of antipathy seen with Eliano and Tommaso Raggio. Bruno seemed to possess a certain dexterity concerning how to navigate the Christian Orient, something Raggio lacked. Despite their differences, Eliano and Bruno worked diligently toward a common goal, as they both saw theological instruction and textual reform as essential elements of constructing a Maronite Catholic confessional identity.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 55v, 193rv/MPOI.195-199.

<sup>62</sup> The original copy of this bull seems to have been lost, or is not inventoried in the Archivio Segreto Vaticano, where it most likely would be housed. There is a copy, in the hand of Eliano, inventoried as ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 147r.

<sup>63</sup> MPOI.457. Cf. Salvatore Bon, "BRUNO, Giovanni," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol. 14, 665-666.

While this did not preclude them from having the occasional spat, they each brought unique skill sets that generally worked well in tandem.

The directives the pair were given also reflect how their different qualities functioned to serve a common goal. Cardinal Carafa explained that one of the main goals of the synod was to ensure that the bishops and priests agreed to promulgate the basic tenets of the Council of Trent. After the synod, the pair was to travel around Lebanon and Syria in order to work with the communities in an effort to ease implementation of the synodal reforms. One of the key components of these visits, Carafa reminded them, was the distribution of vestments and sacred vessels, which the Maronite churches so gravely lacked. Carafa also wanted the pair to instruct Maronites in the rosary, have them switch to the Gregorian Calendar, and strive to send to Rome perhaps as many as eight or ten youths for instruction at the College of the Neophytes.<sup>64</sup> While Carafa's directives highlight the unique skills each man brought to the mission, they are, in some sense, very general and non-descript. They reflect only the broad objectives of the papal curia.<sup>65</sup>

Mercurian's instructions better illuminate how the second leg of the mission was to be different from the first. Mercurian began by expressing the importance of the mission and the necessity of working with the Maronites with diligence and care in order to push them toward reform. And unlike Carafa's directives, which stressed the same old missionary tropes that reflected the goals of the early modern papacy, Mercurian was much more specific; in a somewhat surprising move considering his opinion of Jewish-lineage Jesuits, Mercurian named Eliano the superior of this mission, not Bruno. Mercurian recognized his previous error in

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<sup>64</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 67r-68v/MPOI.205-207.

<sup>65</sup> I elaborate further on the goals of the papal curia in the second half of the sixteenth century and how its attitude toward the Christian Orient impacted the Jesuits in Chapter Four, "The Society of Jesus Between Rome and the Christian Orient."

naming an inexperienced and intractable Tommaso Raggio as superior, and he was not going to make that mistake again, even if it meant making Eliano the superior:

Flee with every bit of diligence from any occasion of disgust and contention between you, and wholly seek to keep yourselves united through close ties of brotherly charity and love, and to demonstrate toward the superior of this mission, Father Battista Eliano, reverence and obedience in all those things that will be imposed on you by him.<sup>66</sup>

He further explained that Eliano was directly responsible for the “health and consoling of his companions, and in particular Father Giovan Bruno,” and that “Father Giovan Bruno must be Father Battista’s consultant and advisor.” This clearly delineated who was in control of the mission.<sup>67</sup> It appears that Mercurian had learned his lesson. His anti-*converso* anxieties had perhaps clouded his judgment before. But Mercurian recognized that he could not risk another internal threat to the mission; the external threats were dire enough. So, Mercurian was sensible enough to recognize that, his Jewish heritage notwithstanding, no one was better equipped to head the mission than Eliano.<sup>68</sup> And so, directives in hand, Eliano and Bruno set off for the Tripoli, arriving on 29 June 1580, with the hope that they could preserve the Maronites’ confessional identity.

Soon after their arrival, Eliano and Bruno were greeted by Bishop Georges, the patriarchal envoy, who accompanied them to Qannubin. After arriving at the monastery on 19 July, the patriarch solemnly welcomed the envoys by calling for a flurry of church bells, which

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<sup>66</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 60rv/MPOI.201. “Fuggano con ogni diligenza ogni occasione di disgusto et contesa tra di loro, et procurino interamente conservarsi fra se stessi uniti con istretto vincolo di carità fraterna et amore, et mostrino verso la persona del superiore di questa missione che sarà il Padre Battista Eliano, riverenza et ubidienza, in tutte quelle cose che da lui saranno loro imposte.”

<sup>67</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 60v/MPOI.200-201. “Al P. Battista raccomandiamo caldamente la sanità et consolatione de’ suoi Compagni, et in particular del Padre Giovan Bruno...Il Padre Giovan Bruno dovrà esser consultore et ammonitore del Padre Battista...”

<sup>68</sup> It is possible that Mercurian’s views had changed, and his work with Eliano may have caused the shift. As Mercurian died 1 August 1580, and his successor, Claudio Acquaviva pushed harder toward pushing former Jews out of the Society, it will forever remain unclear if he eased his view or not. There is no written evidence to suggest he eased his views, and this is only conjecture on my part. For more on the generalate of Mercurian and his stance on Jews and *conversos*, see Robert A Maryks, *The Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews*, 123-143.

reverberated throughout the vicinity of the monastery the joy of the recent arrival of the patriarch's honored guests. Despite suffering from an illness that kept him bedridden, "as soon as [the patriarch] saw us, he cried from happiness" and professed his love and loyalty to Rome.<sup>69</sup> Eliano and Bruno then met with Maronite bishops to read Bruno's newly-written Christian doctrine and the proposed decrees of the synod that the pair planned to convene at Qannubin on 15 August in commemoration of the Feast of the Assumption. Before the synod could take place, the envoys needed to demonstrate to the Maronites that they were there to safeguard them from outside threats through spiritual reform. Only then could the synod be seen as a collaborative effort rather than a compulsory dictate forced upon the communities, even though it certainly was a Latinizing project. Over the next few weeks, Eliano and Bruno dedicated themselves to collating and correcting manuscripts and preparing the various items they had procured for the Maronite churches.<sup>70</sup> By 14 August, 1500 Maronites, including numerous priests and bishops, had flocked to Qannubin to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption. It was at this point that Eliano and Bruno deemed it best to distribute some gifts they had brought from Rome; when Eliano proclaimed that these were gifts of the Holy See, they all declared their desired to be "under the faith of the Holy Roman Church, loathing all the other nations and sects," which greatly contented Eliano and Bruno. The Maronites then implored the Jesuits to come to their villages to be their spiritual guides.<sup>71</sup>

After meeting with many Maronite pilgrims, the legates then moved into the monastery for the convocation of the synod. After the bishops, priests, and other Maronite religious met to

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<sup>69</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 102r/MPOI.217. "Arivamo a Canubin alli 19 di luglio quando con grande alerezza, à suon di tutte le lor campane, fumo solennemente ricevuti; et il patriarcha, trovandolo in letto indisposto, subito che ci veddi piangeva di alerezza et proferiva insieme con li altri mille parole affettuose verso S.Stà et di V.S.I..."

<sup>70</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 102r/MPOI.217-219.

<sup>71</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 102r/MPOI.219. "et non si sentiva da tutti altro che ringratiar il Sr et la Stà di N.S. et V.E.I. di tanto bene che all'hora ricevevano, protestando tutti di voler viver in morir sotto la fede della Sta Chiesa Romana, detestando tutte le altre nationi et sette, che in vero à tutti noi ci diede singolar contento et animo di caminar sicuramente innanzi."

begin the synod, Eliano and Bruno commenced with the Mass of the Holy Spirit. Mass ended, Eliano explained in Arabic why he and Bruno had come. The Maronites, led by the patriarch, listened attentively and eagerly as Eliano told of his desire to bring them closer in communion with Rome and to keep them safe from the treacherous clutches of apostasy and schism.<sup>72</sup> After a reflection on the union struck under Pope Innocent III in 1215, Eliano led the Maronites “ad alta voce” in a profession of faith. After this, the patriarch read the oath of confirmation and was given the pallium, the symbol of papal recognition of his office. Eliano recounted that, upon the reciprocal acknowledgement of the patriarch as a dutiful son of Rome, “everyone was full of such joy that, without us knowing to say anything, everyone cried in unison, while all the bells played: ‘May all this be done in the honor of the blessed God, Kyrie eleison.’”<sup>73</sup>

Eliano then paused for a moment to reflect on the congregation’s exuberance for the patriarch’s coronation. Almost overcome by tears, Eliano was awestruck how “a people so far from Italy, in these mountains, in the midst of such infidels and schismatics, are with readiness and love to believe and do all that the Holy Roman Church professes.”<sup>74</sup> Eliano’s emotional response to their dedication and his emphasis on the threats to the Maronites reflect much about the state of the community. In spite of all the threats to the community, they held fast to their beliefs, and such perseverance on their part was the product of a strong communal bond grounded in their faith. Eliano was thoroughly impressed how, despite their ignorance, illiteracy, and poverty, they persisted in their loyalty to Rome and clung to that as the foundation of their religious and cultural identity. Moreover, Eliano is using his own emotive response to their

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<sup>72</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 102rv/MPOI.220.

<sup>73</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 102v/MPOI.220-221. “furono tutti ripieni di tanta alegrezza che senza saper ne dir noi cosa alcuna, tutti ad una voce gridavano, mentre che sonavano tutte le campane: <<Tutto Questo sia fatto all’honor di Dio benedetto, Chirieleison.>>”

<sup>74</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 102v/MPOI.221. “Fu questo à noi et à certi altri de nostri latini che se trovarono presenti, di tanta alegrezza, che senza lachrime non si poteva star, ne hora dir, considerando che un popolo così lontano da Italia, in questi monti, in mezzo de tanti infedeli et scismatici, sia con la prontezza et amor di creder et far tutto quello che tiene la Sta Chiesa Romana, et che li porta tanto amor et che tanto honoratamente ne parla.”

profession of faith as a means to place himself at the center of the confessionalizing process that the synod hoped to initiate; it was no accident that Eliano himself led the profession of faith that began the very event during which the patriarch acknowledged papal primacy and received the pallium. Eliano, the Elijah of Maronite confessionalization, reminded Carafa and Mercurian on several occasions of his dedication to the mission and how he would strive to keep the Maronites from turning away from the faith.

And Eliano still recognized that the threats to the Maronites' Catholic identity were very real; as the superior in the mission, he fashioned himself, and no one else, as the one who took up the cross of preserving the Maronites, lest the community crumble under the pressures of the Ottomans and Orthodox Christians. After all, Eliano's experience with the deterioration of the Coptic community in the 1560s provided him a certain foresight that others lacked: he knew better than any of his companions that communities like the Maronites and Copts would always be in danger so long as the nations that opposed them continued to exist, and it would only be through his continual efforts that the fringes of Catholicism could be saved from falling to the infidel. Eliano understood that, while the great enthusiasm shown in the synod was a positive sign, the threats to the Maronites would not evaporate, and that the implementation of the synodal decrees would take more than a three-day session of clerics. He recognized it would take a collaborative effort from both Rome and the Maronites, especially the patriarch and his prelates. The biggest step came the following day, when Patriarch Mihail exhorted his bishops to follow him in faith and dedication to Rome by giving themselves and their flocks over to the papal legates. He ordered his bishops to allow the pair to examine their books in order that they

be properly amended or, in some cases, destroyed.<sup>75</sup> And then, all present read the decrees of the synod, with Eliano and Bruno presiding alongside Mihail.

The Jesuits' main goal in the synod was the erasure of any perceived heresies in the Maronites' beliefs, particularly their Christology.<sup>76</sup> The Maronites had often been seen, correctly or not, as miaphysites, believing that Christ's divinity and humanity were united in one nature, rather than the Chalcedonian formula in which the two natures were wholly preserved in the hypostatic union of Christ. In a show of solidarity, the Maronite bishops, following Mihail's lead, professed their belief in the two natures of Christ and acknowledged the scriptural support for the Chalcedonian formula.<sup>77</sup> The synod then proceeded to discuss the seven Sacraments and their importance for salvation. These canons, going into great detail concerning the theological significance of each Sacrament, also emphasized the importance of the clergy, who are necessary for their administration. Baptism, for example, was only to be administered by a priest or deacon, except in extreme cases when a cleric was not available or there appeared to be imminent danger to the unbaptized.<sup>78</sup> When discussing the Eucharist, the Maronite bishops also accepted the necessity of a priest and agreed to cease giving the Eucharist to newly baptized infants, allowing only youths with the capacity of reason to participate in the reception of the body and blood of

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<sup>75</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 102v/MPOI.221.

<sup>76</sup> Rather than give a point-by-point summary of the synod, I have decided to continue the narrative and place the synod into the greater context of the missions as a whole. An in-depth summary of the synod can be found in Matti Moosa's *The Maronites in History*, 245-255. The discussion of the synod here will focus instead on how the synod should be viewed as a part of the Jesuits' experience in the Christian Orient rather than its impact on the Maronites alone.

<sup>77</sup> "Synodus Libani" (1580), in *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire du Christianisme en Orient*, vol. I, edited by Antoine Rabbath (Paris: AMS Press, 1905), 154. "Confitemur itaque in una Christi persona duas natura divinum scilicet. Et humanam, ut apertissime testatur Scriptura. Nam quod Christus fuerit Verbum in principio, quod erat Deus, per quod creata sunt omnia, quod manifeste declaratus fuerit a Patre Filius dilectus, quod imperaverit mari, quod mortuos ad vocis imperium suscitaverit, quod tandem ipsemet dixerit: Ego et Pater unum sumus; haec omnia divinum naturam in Christo Domino aperte demonstrant. Quod autem fuerit Abrahae promissum ex ipsius semine nasciturum Christum, et quod ex eodem semine fuerit jam genitus, quod esuriverit, sitierit, dormierit, fuerit crucifixus, haec et huiusmodi alia humanam plane naturam ostendunt. Quod autem una tantum fuerit Christi Persona et divina, eadem Scriptura sacra testatur aperte."

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 158.



Christ.<sup>79</sup> Theology and doctrine aside, in this canon the most important phrase for understanding the goals of the synod is “it is permitted in our Church” (*Licet in nostra Ecclesia*). This seemingly innocuous expression of unity between the Jesuits and the Maronites signifies best that Eliano and Bruno’s efforts to Latinize the Maronites were grounded in their belief that adherence to the Roman Church was the only way to preserve the community from both Turkish and Orthodox Christian threats. By presenting the canons as shared beliefs rather than as dictates imposed from the outside, the synod became a collaborative effort in which the Maronites worked alongside Gregory and his legates in preserving both their community and their souls.

But the emphasis on mutual participation seems to disappear in the tenth chapter of the Synod, “De Reformatione.” It began by stressing that, beyond the purification of the faith, the main goal of the synod is to reform the “soundness of character” and to strive for the “restitution of collapsed church discipline.”<sup>80</sup> The most telling canon of “De Reformatione” was that the official Maronite bible, albeit written in Arabic rather than Latin, should adhere to the prescriptions of the Council of Trent, with no room for variation. The canon even went so far as to list, in precise order, every book of the Old and New Testaments.<sup>81</sup> Despite efforts to reform from within the community, an unambiguous promulgation concerning scripture made it patently clear that the synod was a dictate from Rome with little input from the Maronites themselves.

While the Maronite clergy surely participated in the Latinization of their beliefs and practices, it

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 161. “Licet nostra Ecclesia, ut in nonnullis aliis, consuetude viguerit, ut infantes usu rationis carentes, ad sacram Eucharistiam admitterentur, certum est tamen nulla salutis necessitate id factum esse, siquidem per baptismi lavacrum regenerati adeptam jam filiorum Dei Gratiam in illa aetate amitter non possunt; quare cum hujus modi infantes nulla obligentur necessitate ad sacramentalem Eucharistiae communionem, consuli debet maxime ejus reverentiae, ne indecenter sumatur; et quoniam magum esset irreverentiae periculum, ut patet, si infantibus Sacramentum hoc ministraretur, merito simul cum Ecclesia Sancta Romana consuetudinem hanc tollendam decernimus.”

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 165. “Eadem Santa Synodus, cum non solum fidei puritatem, sed morum etiam integritatem Ecclesia maxime curet, ad restituendam collapsam ecclesiasticam disciplinam, depravatos quoque in clero et populo nostro mores emandandos, hos praesentes canones decrevit.”

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 167. “Placuit et Sanctae Synodo Sacrorum Librorum indicem qui a sacris Conciliis et praecue a Tridentino proponitur et suscipitur, hic ad calcem adscribendum, ne cui dubitatio suboriri possit quinam sint.”

nevertheless remains true that Eliano and Bruno delivered the decrees and there would be no discussion or debate. In this regard, the synod was unequivocally a Roman project.<sup>82</sup>

But even though the synod took all of three days to conclude, and even though Eliano would strive to correct many books and provide countless vessels with which the Maronite priests could perform the Mass, one of the major problems that the Jesuits faced in the Latinization process was the lack of training for young priests. Eliano was horrified by the general ignorance of the Maronites, and little would change if their priests were not properly trained. However, the Maronites had no true seminary that provided adequate intellectual and theological rigor necessary for performing the work Eliano and Bruno believed needed to be done. To alleviate this, Eliano made immediate plans to send four youths to Rome to be trained by the Jesuits at the Collegio Romano, and would send more as soon as possible.<sup>83</sup> Eliano believed that the Society could guide these young novices through immersion in pastoral activities, work with the urban poor, and participation in the vibrant liturgical life of Rome. After receiving extensive educational and vocational training in Rome, these newly-ordained Maronite priests would then return to Mount Lebanon to serve the needs of the community. This plan served two important functions for confessional preservation. First, these Maronite youths would be given the best Catholic education possible, and would be among the foremost young priests within the Church. Secondly, and more importantly, these Jesuit-trained priests would come from within the Maronite community. Even the most xenophobic Maronites would welcome these young priests as participants in, rather than outsiders forcing, the Maronites' movement toward Latinization. While the potential that they would be rejected still remained, Eliano was confident that this was the best means to preserve the community once the Jesuits departed for

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<sup>82</sup> For more on the goals of the synod, cf. Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 137-138.

<sup>83</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 103r/MPOI.223.

Rome. Decrees accepted, Eliano and Bruno then set off for the Maronite villages to assist in their implementation.

### **Toward Maronite confession-building**

By late September, Eliano and Bruno had conducted numerous visits throughout the Maronite communities. On one hand, Eliano was pleased with how well the villagers had received him and Bruno. The Maronites were particularly amenable when it came to implementing the correct form of the Trisagion as well as adding the *Filioque* to the creed. They also willingly handed over their books to be corrected, and generally showed “great readiness in spirit” to learn everything that Eliano and Bruno sought to teach them.<sup>84</sup> But Eliano also reported several issues that continued to hinder their efforts. First, Maronite nuns had no private convent separated from the monks. He reported that the Maronite people were troubled by this as well, and as a result the patriarch promised to procure some funding in order to cloister the nuns. But Eliano nevertheless found it disconcerting that they lived in the monastery and served the personal needs of the monks.<sup>85</sup> Eliano would not have needed to explain to Rome what was so disturbing about the lack of a convent for women. The movement toward enclosure, which hit its apex at the Twenty-Fifth Session of the Council of Trent, stressed the preservation of the nuns’ chastity and security.<sup>86</sup> From Rome’s perspective, the integration of the sexes threatened the

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<sup>84</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 154r/MPOI.234. “et in questo si vede grande prontezza di animo a voler tutti far quello che sono insegnati.”

<sup>85</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 154r/MPOI.234-235.

<sup>86</sup> J. Waterworth, ed., *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent, Celebrated Under the Sovereign Pontiffs, Paul III, Julius III and Pius IV* (London, C. Dolman, 1848), 240-241. While this would not have been a concern for Eliano, European secular authorities had likewise moved toward enclosure in order to protect against the erosion of the patriciate communities. This occurred in Venice and Milan in particular. Cf. Jutta Gisela Sperling, *Convents and the Body Politic in Late Renaissance Venice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); P. Renee Baernstein, *A Convent Tale: a Century of Sisterhood in Spanish Milan* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

religious' ability to focus on their duties as spiritual models for the community and left them open to carnal vice.

And deconstructing internal threats to the community's stability, such as monastic reform, was not the only problem. Word reached the patriarch that he was in imminent danger because the Turkish officials were displeased with his efforts for union with Rome and with the presence of the Jesuits. With his previous arrest in Cairo in 1562 in the back of his mind, Eliano decided to flee with the Patriarch disguised as a Maronite villager.<sup>87</sup> It seems that Bruno had no need to hide his identity (he remained dressed *alla franca*, like a Frank); but Eliano's desire to dress *alla paesana da maronita*, like a Maronite peasant, suggests that Eliano still feared for his personal safety. Despite how much time had passed since his arrest and flight from Egypt, he simply could not escape the anxiety that resulted from those dreaded events from nearly twenty years prior. Word had also reached Lebanon that the Greek archbishop of Nicosia was undercharging for marriages and dispensations, and many Cypriot Maronites were converting because of this financial benefit. Eliano voiced concern that, should such a trend continue, the Maronite community on Cyprus would be consumed by the Greeks. Eliano believed that the pope should write to the Patriarch of Constantinople and request he order his archbishop to cease his actions.<sup>88</sup> But there was little hope of that working, as the patriarch and the pope were hardly cordial.

Eliano's personal fears and the necessity to protect the Maronites from Turks and Greeks then led Eliano and Bruno to inquire if the French ambassador in Constantinople would serve as the protector of the Maronites in Lebanon. Beginning with the relationship Eliano had fostered

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<sup>87</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 154v/MPOI.235. "Però fattene maturamenta una consulta, si ha determinato che il P. Battista, vestito alla paesana da maronita per saper la lingua, andasse in questa visita col Patriarca o qualche suo Vescovo ne' luochi lontani dal monasterio, ritornando sempre con ogni commodità al monastero ogni otto o 15 giorni a riferir et consultar col compagno dele cose occorrenti, sicome già si è incominciato a far."

<sup>88</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 155r/MPOI.237.

with Guillaume Gardiolles, the French consul in Alexandria who freed him from prison in 1562, Eliano looked highly upon the French. He saw them as staunch defenders of the interests of the Church, and he recognized that the kings of France in particular wanted to be seen as the most Christian monarchs, a contested title also held by their Hapsburg rivals. And since 1536, France was the Sultan's main European ally; should the French ambassador in Constantinople, Jacques de Germigny, present King Henri III as the defender of the Maronites, the Ottomans would surely prevent any attacks on the community as a diplomatic favor.<sup>89</sup> The legates explained to Carafa that, as the Maronites were a loyal Catholic community with ancient Christian roots, the Maronites would welcome the French as their defenders. And it would please Henri, as he desired to be seen as the most Catholic king.<sup>90</sup>

Keeping busy trying to protect the Maronites and ensure they were implementing the synodal reforms proved to be tiring for Eliano and Bruno. In November 1580, Eliano wrote to Mercurian that in the past forty days they had travelled to many villages in order to assist in the implementation of the synodal decrees. Eliano mentioned that he was able to say Mass every day wherever he was. Eliano was pleased by how eager the local priests were to assist him. He had written much of the Mass in Arabic for the benefit of the Maronite priests, and they helped him perform the Mass with ease, "as if in Italy."<sup>91</sup> But the legates were growing tired, and Eliano knew that attempting to visit every village would be a daunting task. He then decided it would be

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<sup>89</sup> Ann Williams, "Mediterranean conflict," in *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World*, edited by Metin Kunt and Christine Woodhead (Longman: London and New York, 1995), 47.

<sup>90</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 154v/MPOI.236. "Pero ci è perso a dirli fra le altre cose, che noi ne scriviamo a V.S. Ill.<sup>ma</sup> per che veda se li paresse ben che il ambasciator del Re Christianissimo, che sta a Roma, per ordine di Sua Santità scrivesse al suo Re, perché il Re ne scrivesse al suo imbasciator di Constantinopoli che tratti questo negocio alla Gran Porta, con dir che questa natione anticamente vive in questo modo, et da tutti sono tenuti christiani et fanno vita christiana, fuor che alla presensia delli ufficiali del Re, per non pagar li dritti che pagano i christiani. Et che adesso sono pronti di pagar con avvantaggio tutti i dritti, purchè alla libera siano lasciati viver christianamente; et si spera che si otterà quello che si desidera, maxime sendo ciò anche utile alla camera regale."

<sup>91</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 157r/MPOI.239. "In questa visita mai ho lasciato di dir la messa, fuor di un giorno che fu indisposto, et chiunque di questi maroniti mi può essa servir, perche tutte le cose che ha di dir il chierico nella messa, le ho scritto nella lor lingua, et subito la vegono la intendono, et mi servono come fosse in Italia."

best to have a brief convention of priests from a few villages in order to help with the reform of ten key issues that Eliano saw as major roadblocks for the Maronites in their effort to achieve full communion.<sup>92</sup> The issues that Eliano emphasized, such as the inclusion of the *Filioque* in the Creed, correction of the Trisagion, and the introduction of the rosary all reflect Eliano's deep concern with stressing outward displays of faith that would bring the Maronites into confessional unity. Eliano's efforts to highlight orthopraxy reflect the same deep preoccupation present in much of his writing and the centrality confession-building continued to play on the mission.

And this fixation on outward signs continued in his description of the Maronites' dress. He explained that all non-Latin Christians in the Muslim world had long been forced to wear a turban in order to distinguish them from Muslims and Europeans. Because the threats against him had not lessened, Eliano continued to dress as a Maronite as he traveled to the mountain villages surrounding Qannubin. Though imposed from above, the Maronites embraced this marker, as it helped them preserve their identity, even if it meant embracing minority status. However, Eliano bemoaned that the sultan promulgated an imperial decree that banned the Maronites from wearing the turban, forcing them instead to wear a black cap "like the Franks," in an effort to eliminate the distinctions between all Christian nations. This troubled Eliano and the Maronites, as it meant they were not able to distinguish their community from others. It also meant that Eliano would not be able to disguise himself as a Maronite, which was essential to him when hiding from his perceived enemies. But there was little to be done, as it was a dictate from the sultan, further demonstrating the sheer helplessness the Maronites found themselves in and how rapidly the patriarch's control over his own community was diminishing.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 157rv/MPOI.240. Eliano described this meeting as a "sinodetto," or little synod.

<sup>93</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 157v-158r/MPOI.241. "Siche noi per occultarci in molti luochi di questi paesi, per non esser cognosciuti tali, bisognava che anche noi lo portassimo; ma perche non lo sapevamo né potevamo portar, anzi quando si guastava, come occorreva, spesse volte il giorno, non lo sapevamo conta di maniera che restavamo

Eliano and Bruno continued their work through the fall and winter, as they continued their apostolic visits. News arrived in March 1581 that on 1 August 1580 Mercurian fell victim to an influenza epidemic raging in Rome. The leading members of the Society elected the Assistant of Germany, Olivier Mannaerts, as Vicar General to oversee the Fourth General Congregation of the Society and the election of the next Superior General. However, the congregation did not take place until 7 February 1581, when Claudio Acquaviva, an Abruzzese of thirty-seven years, was elected as the fifth Superior General. The lull between superiors general left the mission to the Maronites in a brief state of limbo. Because of the difficulty in reaching Mount Lebanon from Tripoli, not to mention the slow and irregular channels of communication between Rome and Lebanon, the legates and their superiors struggled to maintain regular correspondence. Because they only received news of Mercurian's death in March 1581, they were still writing reports to Mercurian throughout the fall, such as the one written in November 1580.<sup>94</sup> And their first letter to Mannaerts was not until 30 March 1581, nearly two months after the election of Acquaviva; and the first letter to Acquaviva was not until 17 June 1581, four months after his election as Superior General.<sup>95</sup> While normally these delays had little impact on the daily operations of the mission, after all missionaries to Goa or Macao faced even more disjointed lines of communication, the transition from Mercurian to Acquaviva put strain on the mission, as each had a different view of how the mission should be carried out. And while Mannaerts and Cardinal Carafa both worked to preserve the mission during the

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impiciati. Ha S. Divina Maestà provisto à questo per un solenne editto del Gran Turco, che nissuno christiano ne judeo in tutto il suo paese, ardisca portar tolbanche, ma solo barette à capelli come hanno li franchi, li judei di color rosso, et li christiani negro (chiamano franchi italiani). Intendono tutti questi popoli di qua, che questo commandamento è il più fastidioso che accascar li potesse, et pagaria facilmente a esser libero di questo commandamento la mità dela sua facultà per ricco che una sia; ma non è possibile à rivocarlo, per esser venuto, come dicono, per ordine immediate dal Re.

<sup>94</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 157r-158v/MPOI.239-242.

<sup>95</sup> For the first letter to Mannaerts, cf. ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 159rv/MPOI.256-257. For the first letter to Acquaviva, see ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 105v/MPOI.264-266.

transition in the Society, it remained unclear what would happen upon the election of a new Superior General.

But when the news of Mercurian's death finally did reach Lebanon, Eliano had no reaction. In his response to Mannaerts' announcement of Mercurian's passing, dated 11 April 1581, Eliano made no mention of the death, giving only a passing reference to the letters received from the Vicar General, thanking him for his charity and "paternal affection."<sup>96</sup> And in his first letter to Acquaviva, Eliano praised his new superior for his deep faith and desire to guide the Society. Eliano also looked forward to Acquaviva's commitment to the success of the mission.<sup>97</sup> Eliano then continued the letter by giving a brief synopsis of the mission, focusing overwhelmingly on his work with Maronite books and apostolic visits to Maronite churches, giving Acquaviva a clear picture of how successful Eliano had been as the mission's superior. While it could be read as a form response to the election of a new superior, when juxtaposed with Eliano's emotionless disregard for Mercurian's death, the warm welcome of the new superior suggests that Eliano embraced the change in leadership. It does not appear that he and Mercurian ever reconciled their differences concerning how Mercurian handled the affair with Raggio.

In spite of the change in leadership in Rome, the mission was progressing well. The distribution of books and gifts was going well, as the Maronites welcomed the Jesuits' help and

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<sup>96</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 159r/MPOI.256-257. "Et ivi dalle lettere habbiamo ricevuto tal consolatione, della quale fin'hora non habbiamo sentito la maggiore, vedendo la charità et affetto paterno di V. Paternità; et sia certo che questo ci spoverà per l'avvenire a corrispondere all'obbligo nostro et desiderio suo et di tutti, sicome speriamo com l'aiuto divino che così testificherà l'esperienza."

<sup>97</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95, f. 105v/MPOI.265. "Nel giorno dell'Ascensione, per lettere mandateci dal fratello Maria da Venetia, ricevessimo l'avviso con molto nostro contento nel Signore, come V.P. esse state eletta per nostro Generale, delle che tutti ne ringratiamo la divia misericordia, poiche speriamo accrescimento dal suo santo servitio nella nostra religione, sicome le sue virtù ci repromettono, et insieme molto suo merito per essere quest'impresa di molte et gravi fatighe."



their desire to provide books and vessels needed for their community.<sup>98</sup> It pleased Eliano how willingly Maronite children embraced him and his efforts to teach them, showing great promise for eradicating the errors and ignorance that the Jesuits believed riddled the community.<sup>99</sup> Eliano and Bruno were still correcting and amending Maronite books, and once this was completed, he would send the corrected versions to Rome to be approved for printing.<sup>100</sup> And then Eliano, in his bibliophilic zeal, shared his joy in having discovered several centuries-old books to be sent to Rome. Two minor works were a thirteenth-century copy of Hebrew Scriptures and an Arabic copy of works of St. John of Damascus. But the prize of the manuscripts was the seventh-century Syriac New Testament, “written in most beautiful script,” that Eliano believed should be housed in the Vatican Library, as such a luxury should be preserved and appreciated rather than left in a monastery in the mountains of Lebanon.<sup>101</sup>

By September 1581, Eliano and Bruno had visited all the Maronites save the communities in Damascus and Aleppo, given them directives for the administration of the Sacraments, and distributed catechisms to the communities.<sup>102</sup> Eliano then enumerated to Carafa all the successes of the mission thus far: the synod, the translation and distribution of Bruno’s catechism and other books, the introduction of the Sacraments of Confirmation and Extreme Unction, the investigation of Maronite libraries, the hours spent travelling from village to village,

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<sup>98</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 I*, f. 104v/MPOI.267. “Circa le robbe et libri che V.S.Illma ci ha fatto portar a questa Nazione, si sono distribuiti quasi tutti con grandi segni di gratitudine verso S. Santità et la Vostra S. Illma; et spero che sene caverà quell frutto che si pretende, massimamente se satisfaremo, con le altre robbe che qua veranno, le altre chiese et persone che non hanno avuto niente.”

<sup>99</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 I*, f. 104v/MPOI.267-268. “Et quello che ci pare esser di gran servitio del Signore, il haver dato a diversi ch’insegnano putti, acciò non resti tanta ignorantia nella Nazione, come è stato pel passato. Habiamo con gran arte et spesa mezzo in ordine alcuni putti di bellissimo ingegno per madar costà.”

<sup>100</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 I*, f. 105r/MPOI.268.

<sup>101</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 I*, f. 105r/MPOI.270. “Haviamo trovato fra questa Nazione un Testamento novo Caldeo in foglio, à carta pecora, antichissimo; et secondo che è notato nel fine del libro, sono da 960 anni che è scritto in bellissima lettera. Lo mandaremo à V.S.Illma. che credo li sarà gratissimo, accio si metta nel Vaticano, o dove li parerà.”

<sup>102</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 I*, f. 128v-129r/MPOI.276.

their instruction of Maronite youths, and their work to send more youths to Rome.<sup>103</sup> The list captures the essence of Eliano's goal as superior of the mission. Throughout, Eliano continually emphasized textual instruction and liturgical orthopraxy as the means by which the Maronites' Catholic identity could be preserved in the face of the myriad threats being launched against them by the Turks and the Orthodox Churches. Additionally, while he wrote the list of deeds in the impersonal third person ("si ha fatto, si ha introdotto, si ha finita, si sono letto," etc.) he concluded the list by explaining that these deeds were done "à nostra instantia," at our insistence. Giving emphasis to both the changes, on one hand, and his role in making those changes happen, on the other, again suggests Eliano's desire to express his central role in the Latinization of the Maronites. While it is certainly true that Eliano is elucidating all the ways in which the Maronites were confessionalizing themselves, Eliano is also positioning himself and his companions as the cause of the Maronites' movement toward orthodoxy.

And Mihail fully supported Eliano and Bruno's work. In twelve articles concerning doctrine and pastoral activities, Mihail commanded his bishops to implement the reforms initiated at the synod one year prior. With a patriarchal mandate, there was no longer a question if the Maronites would move closer to full Latinization. As the articles represent Mihail's efforts to institute the very bases of the faith that the Council of Trent sought to construct, this was a major step toward Latinization of the Maronite church that continued through the rest of the sixteenth and into the seventeenth century.<sup>104</sup> Also unique to the Maronite church (something neither Eliano nor any other missionary would experience elsewhere in the early modern

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<sup>103</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 129rv/MPOI.277. "Siamo hormai al termine di haver fatto quanto per far si desiderasse da noi in questa missione, per che si ha fatto il sinodo, et pubblicato il catechismo et altri libri, si ha introdotto il sacramento della cresma et estrema onzione, si ha finita la visita, si sono letto gran parte delli lor libri, et notato li errori et fatto capaci di questi, et con longa conversatione con lor si hanno ripreso li lor abusi, et incaminato molte verità; si sono messo in tutte le chiese li avisi da osservar, et insegnato tutte le forme et materie de sacramenti et si sono à nostra instantia indrizato in molti luochi alcune schole et sono mandati li putti à Roma da donde speriamo il compimento di quello si desidera per salute della natione."

<sup>104</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 106r-107v/MPOI.279-281.

Christian Orient) was continuity in the patriarchal line. Rather than experiencing the type of uneasiness felt in Egypt concerning patriarchal authority, Eliano leant on Mihail as the true leader of the community. And when Mihail died on 20 September 1581, his brother Sarkis was elected patriarch. Sarkis was one of the signatories of the synod and driving forces behind assisting in its implementation; he would continue to follow the path toward Latinization that his brother had forged, assuaging any anxieties of a lapse into heresy.<sup>105</sup>

As 1581 came to a close, the mission seemed to be a resounding success. Acquaviva and Sarkis, who both entered the scene *in media res*, embraced the mission and believed that Eliano and Bruno's work benefitted both Rome and the Maronites; they had strengthened papal authority in the East and saved the Maronites from their Turkish enemies. The Maronites sent to Rome were progressing in their studies as well. One pupil, a Cypriot Maronite named Markos, was barely able to withstand the excitement of learning Latin.<sup>106</sup> Another, Antonio Maronita, explained to Eliano that Cardinal Carafa was a caring spiritual mentor and played such a vital role in his desire to learn and grow as a true member of the Roman Church.<sup>107</sup> It appeared that

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<sup>105</sup> Eliano praised Sarkis ar-Ruzzy in a letter to Claudio Acquaviva, dated 3 October 1581, just after his election as patriarch. Cf. ARSI, *Ital.* 156, f. 358r/MPOI.292-293. "Et la matina del giorno determinato, inanzi la messa, con comun consenso, à viva voce elessero per Patriarca il sudetto fratello del morto, persona certo meritevole sì per bontà di vita, come per dottrina, et qualche esperienza di bon governo, poiche in vita di suo fratello egli sosteneva il carico dell'occipationi patriarcali. Et con commune allegrezza fù celebrata la messa, dove con le loro solite ceremonie li diedero il possesso del patriarcato, et tutti li resero obediencia al fine della messa in chiesa. Et finalmente partirono con comun contento di buon successo di governo."

The minutes of the election of Patriarch Sarkis ar-Ruzzy were found in Eliano's personal papers, originally written in Arabic with Syriac script (karchuni), save two Latin lines recognizing the presence of Eliano and Bruno at the election. Cf. ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 628r-629v. A translation into French, with the Arabic original, can be found in MPOI.281-286.

<sup>106</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 141r/MPOI.301. "In quanto che per l'amore grande che ci porta desidera intendere come passamo di sanità, e che profitto facciamo nella lingua latina, li respondo brevemente che ci troviamo tutti sani, salvi et contenti, et nelle lettere insino adesso per la lingua strana non havemo potuto caminare à gran passi, pure intendemo tutti l'attivi, et speramo quest'anno fare qualche cosa, che allegri questi Signori e V.R., Padre nostro in Christo Jesù carissimo, per il quale notte e giorno stamo in oratione; che Iddio toglia da noi anni ed aggiunghi a V.R."

<sup>107</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 143r/MPOI.299. "Chiaramente si conosce che ci habbia V.R. partoriti del Signore, poichè con tanto affetto ed amorevolezza ci scrive, esortandoci all'imparare virtù. Dal canto nostro non si mancherà, purché piaccia a Dio, di far opra che S. Santita, l'Illmo Cardinale Carafa, nostro unico protettore, e V.R. restino contento del frutto che si cavera da questa vostra vigna; la chiamo vostra perchè dopo l'Eterno Iddio, vostri semo."

the Maronites no longer needed help in carrying out reforms. With such positive signs in Rome concerning the training of Maronites at the Seminario Romano, and with a new patriarch poised to guide the Maronites in Latinization, Eliano's services were becoming an asset that some believed were better served elsewhere.<sup>108</sup> One man who thought so was Giulio Antonio Santorio, Cardinal of Santa Severina and protector of the Oriental Orthodox Churches. Santa Severina wanted the Church to make a second push toward union with the Copts. In February 1582, Santa Severina wrote to Eliano and Bruno imploring them to consider a mission to Egypt under the protection of the French consul, Paolo Mariani.<sup>109</sup> And by June, Acquaviva agreed that Eliano should be sent to Cairo, with Bruno returning to Italy as soon as possible.<sup>110</sup>

At first Eliano was not keen on a return to Cairo. In two letters dated 1 August 1582, written to Acquaviva and Santa Severina respectively, Eliano made it quite clear that he did not desire to abandon the Maronites just yet. He explained to Acquaviva that Bruno had already left for Italy against both his and Sarkis's will, whereas Eliano travelled to Aleppo in order to visit the Maronite community, meet with the Jacobite Patriarch Ignatius-Dawud, and fulfill some of the spiritual needs of Latin merchants in the city.<sup>111</sup> To Santa Severina, he explained that he had been ordered by Gregory and Acquaviva not to depart for Cairo without written consent.<sup>112</sup> But shortly after he denied Santa Severina's request, Acquaviva's 16 June letter commanding Eliano

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<sup>108</sup> ARSI, *Venet* 2, f. 70r/MPOI.304-305. "L'ultime lettere delle RR.VV. al Cardinale Carafa hebbero buon recapito, et havendo S.S. Illma informato N.S. di quanto si era fatto intorno alla missione, Sua Santità ne è restata satisfatta. Et intese le ragioni ch'elle esponevono perchè è bene che ritornino à primavera in Italia, Sua Santità se ne contenta."

<sup>109</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 147v/MPOI.309. "Di più ho inteso ancora quel che scrivono al medesimo M. Horatio intorno alla chiamata loro al Cairo da quell Console Francese, e dal Patriarca e Christiani della Natione Cofta, et n'ho parlato à N.S., il quale s'è contento che le Reverentie Vostre vi vadino."

<sup>110</sup> ARSI, *Venet.* 2, f. 86v/MPOI.316. "Con certa occasione l'Ilmo Cardinale Carafa hà trattato con S. Santità circa l'andare del P. Battista al Cairo, et le è perso che vada; così hoggi mi hà mandato à dire esso Ilmo Carafa."

<sup>111</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 153r/MPOI.332.

<sup>112</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 III, f. 158r/MPOI.337. "et in torno questo primo haviamo già havuto anco ordine da Mgr Illmo Caraffa, per ordine di S. Santità, et da nostro Padre generale, che se il medesimo patriarca non ci scriverà et invitarà al andarvi, che non ci andiamo."

to travel to Cairo arrived in Tripoli. The next day, he wrote to his superior that his departure for Cairo was imminent, and that he would also write to Carafa and Santa Severina in order that they know of his plan to embark for Cairo as soon as possible.<sup>113</sup> Eliano spent a few more weeks in the Levant, splitting his time between Tripoli and Aleppo. He visited Qannubin one last time to say his farewells to Patriarch Sarkis and his bishops. By mid September he was in Tripoli preparing for his departure, which took place on 22 September 1582. On 3 October he landed in Alexandria and checked in at the residence of the French consul, Paolo Mariani. His time with the Maronites had come to an end.<sup>114</sup>

### **Conclusions: Eliano and the mission to the Maronites**

The mission to the Maronites presented a unique situation for Rome. On one hand, no Eastern Church was more amenable to Tridentine Catholicism. The Maronites had been in communion with Rome since late antiquity, even if lines of communication had been broken. And, with the dawn of the Crusades, Rome and the Maronites had grown closer, especially after the Fourth Lateran Council. Throughout their stay in Lebanon, the Jesuits found the Maronites desirous of unity and Latinization, even if in some cases perceived heresies were hard to remove or were, at the very least, only begrudgingly dropped by the community. But on the other hand, because of their Catholic identity no community of the Christian Orient faced the types of pressures the Maronites did. The Maronites were perceived as heretics by Muslims and Christians alike. In 1582, Ignatius-Dawud, Syriac Orthodox (Jacobite) Patriarch of Antioch,

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<sup>113</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 155r/MPOI.344. “Hierì ho ricevuto una di V.P.Rda delli 16 di junio, nella quale mi ordina esperessamente che senza altro mi transferisca con Mario al Cairo, il che senza replica essequirò con la gratia del Signore per la prima occasione di andar per mar ò per terra.”

<sup>114</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 II, f. 64v/MPOIV.26. “Et così siamo partiti da Tripoli li 22 del passato. Et siamo arivati qui in undeci giorni, dove sono stato ricevuto col mio compagno, molto amorevolmente, dal Clarissimo Signor Paolo Mariani, consolo per il Re christianissimo nel Egitto, et ha voluto che mi fermassi in casa sua.”

described the Maronites as a “nation of fools,” encapsulating exactly how many Christians of the Near East viewed this Catholic sect.<sup>115</sup> And the pressures the Greeks of Cyprus placed on the island’s Maronite community is also well documented.<sup>116</sup> They too, like most Christian groups, faced constant harassment from their Turkish rulers. While the Ottomans technically granted the Maronites freedom of practice, they nevertheless restricted the community’s ability to flourish and direct its own faith. Add to it the fact that the Maronites’ main ally was the Roman pontiff, and it is no wonder that the Ottomans saw the Maronites as a potentially dangerous internal Other only a short journey from Constantinople.

When Eliano and Tommaso Raggio arrived in Lebanon in June 1578, they had one objective: Latinize the Maronites in order to protect them from the apostatizing threats coming from the infidel Turk and the schismatic Eastern and Oriental Christians. There was a legitimate chance that, unless the Maronites were protected, they surely would fall into the treacheries and slavery of Islam, and such apostasy would ravage the community and corrupt it forever. But Raggio was not as committed as Eliano; his desire to abandon the mission early on is an indication of, at the very least, a lack of desire or wherewithal to see the mission through. Raggio also lacked Eliano’s savvy. Whereas Eliano recognized how delicately they needed to proceed, Raggio was abrasive, stubborn, diffident, lazy, insolent, and even violent. Raggio never truly grasped the fragile state the Maronites were in, and just how easy it was for their identity to be altered and for them to be lost to the infidels and enemies of the true faith.

While Raggio lacked even a modicum of common sense concerning how to deal with the cultural dynamics of the early modern Mediterranean, Eliano was all too aware that lines of demarcation in the Mediterranean were very thin, very elastic. As his life demonstrated, no one’s

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<sup>115</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 164/MPOI.356.

<sup>116</sup> See n.58 and n.88 above.

identity was fixed. By contrasting himself with Raggio, the self-constructing Eliano (a staunch Catholic missionary and potential martyr) placed himself within a constructed Catholic identity with fictively fixed boundaries that contradicted reality while placing Raggio on the fringes, dangerously close to transgression. Eliano's hypersensitivity, matured after decades of experience, demonstrated the nature of his cultural formation in contrast to Raggio's. This is pivotal when attempting to unravel the trajectory of Eliano's self-construction and how his placement of Raggio potentially outside Catholicism signified an effort toward self-confessionalization. His reaction to Raggio's immersion in a "foreign" culture, Raggio's learning Turkish especially, illuminates Eliano's subconscious awareness that group identity is constructed around perceived static collective difference. Because margins of cultural difference were hardly rigid in any real sense, Eliano understood that attempts to identify with the very groups that threatened to tear down constructed boundaries between intellectually perceived cultural Others undermined one's participation in Catholic collective identity. By juxtaposing Raggio's actions (attempting to learn Turkish, sitting idly by immersed in his own comforts, and desiring to go to the depraved Constantinople) with his own (preaching, translating texts, performing the Mass, hammering out doctrinal matters with theologians), Eliano reaffirmed his Catholic identity and again rejected his Jewish past. And Eliano's attempts to convince Raggio that his efforts were undermining the mission indeed reflected Eliano's personal adherence to the larger group convictions of early modern Catholicism.

But the question of cultural permeability did not simply wither away solely because Raggio was pulled from the mission. When Eliano returned with Giovanni Bruno in June 1580, they were charged to carry forth the goals that had had to be aborted as a result of the dispute between Eliano and Raggio. This provided an opportunity for Eliano and Bruno to demonstrate

strong convictions in the tenets of the faith. By guiding the Maronites through the synod, Eliano and Bruno placed themselves at the center of religious preservation; the Maronites' desire to follow the command of Rome, while sincere, nevertheless was the brainchild of the two legates. And Eliano never missed an opportunity to remind others of this. He made it clear time and time again that the project was his; being named superior gave him a certain level of legitimacy that he had desired ever since his conversion and his efforts in Egypt. The doubts surrounding his loyalty to Rome, both from within Catholicism and without, were a driving force not only in the dispute with Raggio, but were important enough for him to stress that the push to Latinize the Maronites was only possible so long as he was superior. He believed that he was why the synod was so successful and why that success had not occurred under Raggio's leadership.

After the synod, Eliano continued to demonstrate how, through his leadership, the Maronites would be saved from the Turk, the Jacobite, the Armenian, the Nestorian, and the Greek. Eliano used his linguistic dexterity to provide for the Maronites corrected texts lest they read themselves into schism. Translating texts that conformed with the decrees of the Council of Trent, instructing Maronite youths, sending seminarians to Rome, and travelling countless hours to isolated villages to assist priests, all demonstrate how Eliano knew that apostasy could be taught and that orthopraxy and true belief could be lost through ignorance. This propelled Eliano's desire to instruct the Maronites both in Lebanon and in Rome. He frequently reminded his superiors that he would tirelessly work to ensure that the Maronites not be lost in the same ignorance that struck the Copts. But much like his time in Egypt, it is clear that, in order to carry out the goals of the mission as he saw them, Eliano had no choice but to lean on his Jewish past. The rigorous education he received from his grandfather stressed textual exactness and lexical precision. While Elijah Levita would have most certainly been mortified to see his grandson use



this training to institute Catholic orthopraxy into the Maronite community, Eliano nevertheless used the skills he honed in his youth to safeguard Catholicism in the Christian Orient by providing the Maronites with fundamental catechetical instruction lest the community forget how to be Catholic.

For Eliano, it certainly remained in the back of his mind that his dedication to the mission and to Rome was not the only reason for his success. He was cognizant that his training in lexicography provided him with the skills necessary to assist the Maronites. And surely Mercurian was pleased that the mission found success under Eliano's leadership; but no doubt he may have resented that a man of Jewish origins was the reason for its success. Eliano never kindled the kind of friendship with Mercurian as he had with the first three superiors general, Ignatius Loyola, Diego Laínez, and Francis Borja. And this is clear in their correspondence, as there appeared to be no amicability in their letters. Eliano's lack of grief when Mercurian died likewise suggests an uneasiness verging on disdain. Eliano would have been well aware of Mercurian's anti-Semitic leanings, and this certainly could not have sat well with Eliano considering his preoccupation with his Jewish past.

His successes in Lebanon seemed to have alleviated the pressures he faced as a Jewish convert. By 1582, Eliano was seen as one of the leading figures in the Society's attempt to bring the Catholic and Orthodox Churches into communion under papal authority. His actions in Lebanon concerning Raggio and the synod of 1580 demonstrated a certain erudition and sagacity fostered by years of experience. Eliano's travels around the Mediterranean had taught him that treacheries, slavery, blood, and lust, even if prejudicial estimations on his part, were not just literary tropes that later propelled the narrative of *A Christian Turn'd Turk*. The concern for the Maronites' souls was real enough that Eliano returned to the Ottoman world in order to prevent

them from being cast into debauchery and vice. His rejection of Raggio's "Turkish" tendencies and his acceptance of Bruno's help in writing a Catechism again illuminate that the threats, while perceptions, were nevertheless products of confessional boundaries that could only be constructed against the borders of heretical and schismatic groups.

And as Eliano left Lebanon for Egypt, he saw work with the Copts as another opportunity to preserve a Christian group from turning Turk. It was also another opportunity for him to present himself as the diligent son of Rome, poised to defend the faith and expand the borders of early modern Catholicism. However, despite the hopes he had for the mission, and despite how great the opportunity the return to Egypt must have seemed, Eliano's second trip to Egypt ended much the same as the first: in prison. In this case, the imprisonment was the result of the Jesuits' efforts with the Copts and their close relationship with French consul Paolo Mariani. When Mariani's personal ties in Egypt were called into question by the Ottomans and the French crown, the Jesuits were caught in the middle; they were seen as personal agents of Mariani as well as a sowers of sedition in his effort to unite the Copts with Rome. Like many, they became victims of a political imbroglio that was no fault of their own. It is to that story that we now turn.

## + Chapter Three +

### Rivalries: Confessional Politics in Ottoman Egypt

“The [theatrical] representation of power is all the more spectacular in that it betrays the anguish of losing it – or of having lost it.” – Michel de Certeau<sup>1</sup>

In the above quote, the late French post-Structural theorist and Jesuit Michel de Certeau illuminated quite poignantly the volatility of early modernity. The teratological attempts to understand and to control understanding were, so Certeau argued, the products of a world grappling with change, change in religion, change in society, and change in political structures and institutions. Certeau posited that the demonic possessions of Ursuline nuns in the 1630s at Loudon in western France, and the reactions to them, were symptoms of early modern society's efforts to deal with the tension created by religious and state institutions' drive to eradicate the remnants of days gone by: popular piety, regional peculiarities, and superstitious belief. For Certeau, the possessions at Loudon represented early modern society itself; it was a world in flux, partly moving forward but still very much entrenched in the past. What is illuminated for us in the Loudon case, especially in terms of the theatricality of power, is the metamorphosis of early modern society: its mutability, unpredictability, and, particularly, its ability to frighten. In this vein, the Jesuits in Egypt in the 1580s were more than just spectators in the theatre of social change; they became its victims. When the Jesuits were sent to Egypt to work with the Coptic Orthodox Church in 1582, the goal was much as it had always been. The Jesuits were to convince the Copts to submit to papal authority and to strive for doctrinal reform. For this reason, this second mission to the Copts was much like the first. But it was similar in other ways as well. First, Eliano's past resurfaced, as he again came face to face with his family. And as it

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<sup>1</sup> Michel de Certeau, *The Possession at Loudun* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 151.

was in the 1560s, Coptic intransigence remained the major obstacle to submission. There were run-ins with Jews, a failed synod, and the Jesuits again wrestled with finding their places within the murky confessional world of Ottoman Egypt.

But what is different here is the manifestation of early modern European confessional politics in the missionary theatre. While the Jesuits had to navigate the confessional, political, and sectarian divisions of the Ottoman world much as they did before this mission, what ensued on this mission, the intersection of missionary efforts and European politics, was on a scale never seen before by Jesuits in the Near East. The conflict began when two diplomats vied for control of the French Consulate in Cairo. The Marseillais Christopharo Vento had been consul before, but he departed from Cairo in 1570 on what was supposed to be a temporary leave. His replacement, the Venetian Paolo Mariani, refused to relinquish his post when Vento returned in 1584. The quarrel quickly escalated and became personal, as Mariani used his deep ties in Ottoman Egypt to oppose Vento whereas Vento used his leverage with the French king, Henry III, to oust Mariani. As the two clashed and sought out any means to weaken the position of the other, their respective allies came under fire. For Vento, this meant undercutting the Jesuits' efforts with the Copts, which included accusations that the Jesuits were both personal agents of Mariani and instigators of a Spanish-backed Coptic revolt against the Ottomans. In the political drama between Vento and Mariani, the Jesuits did not remain passive, innocent observers for long; on 21 September 1584, three months after Vento's arrival in Cairo, guards of the pasha stormed Mariani's residence as Eliano and his companions were preparing to say Mass. Swords drawn, the guards physically assaulted the clerics, arrested them, and carried them off to prison.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> ARSI, *Gal. 106*, f. 244rv./MPOIV.289. "Poiché nel giorno del glorioso Santo Matteo Apostole, nel far del giorno, preparandoci noi per dir messa, ecco che all'improvviso sentimmo gran rumore d'homini armati, mandati dal Signore Bascià, governatore dell'Egitto, a prenderci in prigione. I quali homini, con spade sfoderate, entrando in casa nostra, subito con pugni et schiaffi battendoci, ne legarno con le mani in dietro. Eravamo nel nostro

The transition of the Jesuits from missionaries sent to Catholicize the Copts to the victims of the affairs of state is precisely the type of social flux to which Certeau referred. The story of the Jesuits' imprisonment, as well as the trajectory of the mission as a whole, is but one of many examples of how the development of early modern state bureaucracy came to intersect and interfere with religious life. While in many cases the rise of the state and its institutions assisted or directed efforts to stamp out heterodoxy (Mariani proved this in his willingness to help the Jesuits on this mission, and this occurred in Egypt as well with Gardiolles in the 1560s),<sup>3</sup> matters of state, or at the very least matters of articulating political power, began to take precedent over religious affairs when the two did not coincide. Vento saw reclaiming his post as far more important than assisting the Jesuits; to him, their mission aided Mariani, not Pope Gregory XIII. That was enough for Vento to undermine the mission and provide the pasha with a reason to imprison the Jesuits. In the struggle of confessional politics, where relations between religious institutions and state power oscillated between alliance and enmity, the Jesuits were undermined by the very means that were designed to support them. When Eliano left Lebanon in September 1582, he believed he and his companions would have the unconditional support of the French, as they always had. Among the European powers French political influence in Egypt was unmatched, and the French crown had seen itself as the defender of the Christian Orient since the Crusades. However, the rivalry between Mariani and Vento changed this, as religion became a hindrance to political power, at least for Vento. This chapter thus depicts two worlds: one based on an alliance of religion and the state and the other based on increasing secularization. On one hand, the French bureaucratic machine was the driving force behind enabling the Jesuits to carry

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appartamento due padri di San Francesco et tre di nostra Compagnia: il Padre Baptista, il Fratello Francesco Buono che venne meco da Venetia, et io.” The author of this letter, written to Father General Claudio Acquaviva, is Francesco Sasso, Eliano’s companion and the theologian for the mission. See further below.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Chapter One for more on Gardiolles.

out this mission, providing them with the necessary financial and political support; but on the other hand, it is also clear that these same institutions had their own agenda, the prerogatives of statecraft, which was slowly moving society in a different direction. While religion never ceased to be an important component of the French crown's efforts to consolidate authority, the story that follows demonstrates that the aspirations of the papacy could run up against the French crown's own push for religious and political consolidation. In this case, undercutting the Jesuit mission, rather than aiding it, was necessary to secure the position of the French crown in the Ottoman Empire.

This intersection of confessionalization and international relations went far beyond just France. Every nation that could participated and collaborated in the diplomatic network of the Mediterranean world. The product of this was a world in which power relations were based on political alliances, personal patronage, and theatrical representations of authority and jurisdiction. Furthermore, early modern empire-building and the diplomatic networks that were established throughout the Mediterranean were based on an equilibrium in which no one power dominated another; the Europeans and the Ottomans were participating, often through conflict but mostly through collaboration, in the development of a world where states survived not by brute force but by their dependence upon one another.<sup>4</sup> These ties also facilitated the commodification of religio-cultural exchange, as leaders of these states strove to position themselves through symbolic representations of power. The efforts of the Spanish crown, for example, to articulate its role as ultimate arbiter of Catholic confessionalization, or Suleiman the Magnificent's desire to demonstrate his cultural superiority over his Hapsburg and papal rivals through the theatrical representation of himself as lord of the world, represent how these leaders

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<sup>4</sup> Charles H. Parker, *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age, 1400-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3.

recognized the importance of self-referential articulations of power and the necessity of strong networks of patronage that girded that power.<sup>5</sup> But the dependence placed on patronage often problematized the imperatives of empire, as individuals and families frequently acquired a significant amount of independent influence, thusly undercutting the authority of their patrons.<sup>6</sup> And for smaller states, particularly the Republic of Venice, which relied on the Ottomans for their commercial viability, it was essential to maintain a balance between being staunchly pro-Ottoman while not circumventing the dominant anti-Muslim rhetoric of the Catholic world, particularly prevalent in the Hapsburg realms. But as Daniel Goffman has suggested, “from the point of view of the Catholic world, the Venetian reliance upon such trade led to a series of understandings with its Muslim adversaries that were deemed shameful,” causing tension between Venice and its place in early modern Europe.<sup>7</sup> And this could be partly the cause for why Henry III recalled the Venetian Mariani, though this is unclear.

For our purposes, these networks, and those who controlled them, directly impacted the Jesuits and their missions. They were forced to appease diplomats and monarchs alike while still striving to maintain independence both in terms of how they evangelized but also how the Society of Jesus conducted itself.<sup>8</sup> Despite recognizing this, the Jesuits were unable to see fully these modernizing impulses for what they were. True, they attempted to find new ways to finance the mission and knew their arrest was the result of backhanded political dealings and bribery; all of this suggests they clearly understood how to find their way on this mission. However, one thing remains patently clear: when they discussed their arrest and its meaning,

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<sup>5</sup> Thomas Dandeleit, *Spanish Rome, 1500-1700* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); Gülrü Necipoğlu, “Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Hapsburg-Papal Rivalry,” *The Art Bulletin* 71, no. 3 (September 1989): 401–427.

<sup>6</sup> Monique O’Connell, *Men of Empire: Power and Negotiation in Venice’s Maritime State* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 57–74.

<sup>7</sup> Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*, 137.

<sup>8</sup> H. Fougeray, “La Mission De France a Constantinople Durant l’Ambassade De M. De Césy,” *Études* 113 (1907): 70–101; Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise*, 41–100.

they still spoke of trusting in divine providence and the acceptance of martyrdom. Here again is the anxiety between the old and the new. Rather than seeing themselves purely as victims of a power play, caught in the crosshairs of the changing structures of the early modern world, they prepared themselves to bear their own crosses and die for Christ. Wrestling with this is the key to unlocking how early modern individuals navigated a world that seemingly changed on a whim with little explanation, where a person's place in the world was growingly defined by a plurality of antithetical (but often congruent) loyalties, and where, at least for some, religion was no longer necessarily the most important of these loyalties. In the second Jesuit mission to Egypt, Giovanni Battista Eliano and his companions held fast to their religious convictions and rationalized both the minutiae of the mission and the Mariani-Vento rivalry the only way they knew how: by viewing it as the will of God. When the Jesuits attempted to grapple with the goals of the French crown and tried to explain why the crown put matters of state before the stability of the mission, they did rationalize the rapid changes taking place; but how they articulated all this remained ensconced in a worldview locked in the past. What follows is an attempt to explore this dissonance.

### **Eliano's struggles in Cairo**

There was much excitement surrounding Eliano's second voyage to Egypt. French consul Paolo Mariani was eager to work with the Jesuits and to support their efforts with the Copts any way he could. As Mariani explained in a letter to Eliano dated 20 September 1582, Eliano's arrival was greatly anticipated, especially since he had been a bit delayed in his departure from Tripoli; and once all matters concerning the Copts' willingness to work with the Jesuits were in



place, only great things would come of the mission.<sup>9</sup> Eliano was optimistic as well. He wrote to the pope that the Maronite mission was a success, and that he was ready to embark on the mission to the Copts. Eliano explained to Gregory that he understood that the Coptic patriarch, John XIV, was willing to discuss matters of faith and potentially move toward union with Rome. Eliano also lauded Mariani for welcoming him into his home. But more importantly, Eliano's praise for Mariani centered on the diplomat's role in setting up the mission. Eliano believed that without Mariani, who had built close ties with the Copts over the previous decade, Eliano and his companions would have struggled to get the patriarch to agree to meet.<sup>10</sup> Eliano had learned in his previous stint in Egypt that he needed to rely on the consulates there, and at that point the French offered the most support both against Ottoman threats and for working among the country's Christians.

Eliano's mood quickly changed, however, in a letter to Giulio Antonio Santoro, Cardinal of Santa Severina.<sup>11</sup> As the Cardinal Protector of the Oriental Churches, Santa Severina had helped bankroll the mission to the Copts and was personally invested in the idea of Coptic submission to Rome. While he did voice the same excitement as he did to Gregory concerning the patriarch's amenability to open discussion, Eliano explained to Santa Severina that he was very skeptical that he could convince the Copts to change their ways regarding their Christological views. He reminded the cardinal of his recent failed efforts with the like-minded

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<sup>9</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 II, f. 53r./MPOIV.22-23. "Con altra li scrivo il bisogno. Questa faccio per dirli come questo messo è satisfatto del tutto, fin al giorno de la sua partenza, in modo che per la sua ritardanza, non li havete a dare cosa alcuna. Questo è causato per l'absentia di Monsignor Patriarca tanto tempo, che quasi desperato ho voluto rimandare il messo al Signor Battista de Jeronimo. Pure ha piaciuto a Dio che ha comparso ultimamente, et che li manda tuto quell ricapitto che da lui si può aspetare. Et riportandomi al'altre mie, non dirò più con questa, doppo molto offerirmi a Vosta Riverenza & di core racomandomi. Nostra Signore li dia gratia di compiere tutte quelle cose che sono in honor di Sua Divina Maestà."

<sup>10</sup> ASV *AA Arm.* I-XVIII, n° 1780./MPOIV.24. "Dove il clarissimo Paolo Mariani, consolo di Franza, quale è stato buona parte causa di questa missione, mi ha ricevuto in casa sua et ha voluto che in essa habitassi; et col suo santo zelo che questi popoli siano aiutati, è venuto meco in persona già quattro volte dal detto patriarca, il quale, se ben è stato infermo, ci ha visto molto volentieri, dandoci buona intentione di voler trattar delle cose di santa fede, havendomi prima di adesso esso patriarca amplamente scritto à Tripoli, invitandomi volessi venir qua."

<sup>11</sup> Santa Severina will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

Jacobites in Syria, and how they openly rejected the Chalcedonian formula; Eliano expected the Copts to do much the same.<sup>12</sup> Also, Eliano's heart was still with the Maronites. After explaining that his presence in Cairo was "by the order of His Holiness," Eliano lamented that he wished to be in Rome to continue his work with Maronite books. It seems that Eliano had wedded himself to the translation project and was saddened to have to abandon it with so much left undone.<sup>13</sup> Eliano begrudgingly entrusted the remainder of the project to Cardinal Antonio Carafa, recognizing that he would carry the project to its finish and would ensure that it was completed under the high standards Eliano had set for it.<sup>14</sup> But Eliano's belief that the Copts were firm in their heresies and that he was not sure he could purge them, as well as his preoccupations with the Maronites, created a potential problem for the mission.

He also was easily frustrated in his early meetings with the patriarch. While the patriarch warmly greeted Eliano and an associate of Paolo Mariani, and the Copts he met willfully listened to what Eliano had to say, the discussion quickly broke down. Throwing caution to the wind, Eliano immediately engaged the Copts in the age-old discussion of Christology. Naturally, little had changed since the 1560s, and the Copts still held to their beliefs in the unified nature of Christ. The Copts explained that what Eliano was proposing was the heresy of Nestorius, which denied the hypostatic union of the divinity and humanity of Christ. This prevented them from

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<sup>12</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 64v./MPOIV.25-27.

<sup>13</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 65r./MPOIV.28. "Se ben havevo gran animo di venir a Roma per poter dar principio a stampar li libri per Maroniti come l'havea promesso Sua Santità, con tutto che già havevamo imbarcato tutte le nostre robbe, non dimeno havendo hauto questo novo ordine, subito mi sono posto in viaggio et siamo arivati qua in unideci giorni, sani, per bontà del Signore."

<sup>14</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 65r./MPOIV.28. "Ma per che sono stato interrotto con la venuta qua, lascerò questo carico a Vostra Signoria Illustrissima, la quale molto ben sa, quanto importa per fermarli nella verità se li stampino buoni libri, che ho mandato corretti col P. Giovanni Bruno. Se io qui tardasse per ordine di Sua Santità, humilmente la supplico vogli haver molto a cuor questo come cosa che tanto importa, et pregandola con ogni humiltà vogli haver memoria di me nelle sue sante orazioni, come io, per peccatore che sia, non cesso di farli per Vosta Signoria Illustrissima."

acknowledging overtly the two natures of Christ.<sup>15</sup> They also discussed other points of contention that surfaced in the 1560s: the *Filioque*, the Trisagion, and the Council of Chalcedon. On every point, Eliano and the patriarchal advisors were at odds. Because “they are so firm in having their books that extensively deal with these things,” Eliano felt that these views would be nearly impossible to change.<sup>16</sup> Eliano also repeatedly suggested that he wished to be elsewhere. On two occasions Eliano used *if* clauses in his reflections, illuminating his reluctance. Rather than stopping at requesting a theologian for the mission, he explained that he would need one “if I have to stay here.” On another occasion, he also wrote “if I should stay here” he would like to be informed of the Maronite book printing project; and should it not be going well, he could easily “return at the first opportunity” lest a sure thing be neglected in favor of an unsure one.<sup>17</sup> His resistance to the mission demonstrates how little faith he had, a shocking change for the usually optimistic Eliano. Normally eager to embrace the mission and work toward the goals prescribed by his superiors, here Eliano took a detour, recognizing that work was still to be done with the Maronites and that the Copts were just as intransigent as when he had left them twenty years prior. Eliano closed the letter by explaining that he did not believe the Copts or any of the

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<sup>15</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 56r./MPOIV.31. “Lui et li suoi ascoltarono il tutto voluntieri. Et così si cominzò a trattar della maggior difficultà che essi hanno. Et è che li par di non poter, salva conscientia, confessar in Christo due nature et due volontà et due operazioni distinte, che è la heresia de Dioscaro et Eutiche, condannati nel Concilio Calcedonese. Ma dicono et confessano veramente le due nature et due operationi et due volontà in Christo, ma che queste due, dopo la unione col Verbo divino, son fatte una natura, una volontà et una operatione; né si possono dir due, temendo di non cascar nella heresia di Nestorio, che confessava due persone in Christo Signore Nostro, et perché non intendono questi esser fatta questa unione nella persona divina, dicono così.” Further elaboration on the Nestorian controversy, accompanied by important documents can be found in John Anthony Cyril McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria: The Christological Controversy: Its History, Theology, and Texts* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1994). Also cf. Susan Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy: The Making of a Saint and of a Heretic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>16</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 56r./MOPIV.31-32. “Et in queste cose et molte altre quali fin hora non ho scoperto, sono tanto saldi per avere i loro libri che diffusamente trattano di queste cose che, umanamente parlando, mi par molto difficile che questi si riducano.”

<sup>17</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 56rv./MOPIV.32. “se conviene che io mi fermi qui, overo se vuol che restando ben informato delle cose di qui, mene ritorni con prima occasione, et attender in Rome a finir le cose de Maroniti acciò non si perde il certo per l’incerto. Et se ho di restar qui, potrà mandar un padre theologo in mia compagnia, acciò possiamo trattar con lor con maggiori fundamenti et far qualche trattato nella lor propria lingua et comunicarselo, il che par se potrà far anche costi.”

Oriental Christian communities would ever submit to Rome or give up their monophysite views, and efforts to try would most likely be futile.<sup>18</sup>

After a month or so, Eliano and Mario Amato<sup>19</sup> were still attempting to work out the theological differences between themselves and the Copts. Eliano believed that the inveterate Copts were playing games with him, for they willfully listened to the Jesuits but in every instance shut them down and refused to change their minds. Eliano explained to Acquaviva that he had spoken to the patriarch and his associates numerous times, but no matter how hard he tried, “I find them each time so entrenched and firm in these heresies of theirs, that I dare say that it will be nearly impossible” to create the union the Holy Father desired.<sup>20</sup> Eliano tried to maintain hope, saying he would not despair so long as God’s providence was there to guide him. However, Eliano’s skepticism concerning the mission remained. Partly to blame for this was his desire to return to Rome; his heart simply did not seem to be in this mission. While he explained that “I subdue all my thoughts to your obedience,” Eliano asked Acquaviva once more for permission to return to Rome, explaining to the Father General that he desired to oversee the imprinting of the Maronite books, fearing that the project would not run as smoothly without

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<sup>18</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 II, f. 57r./MPOIV.34. “Quanto a me, mi par che nissuna nazione di questi orientali l’accontentaranno, per non intenderlo.” Eliano is quite vague here. There had long been a distinction between Eastern Orthodox (those who accepted Chalcedon but not Roman primacy) and Oriental Orthodox (those who rejected both). The Copts, like the Jacobites were considered Oriental Orthodox. It is unclear if Eliano means just them or the Greeks as well. For more on this distinction, especially regarding the Copts, see Otto Friedrich August Meinardus, *Two Thousand Years of Coptic Christianity* (American University in Cairo Press, 1999). For a more elaborate discussion of the division of Christianity and the role of the ecumenical councils in the late antique period, see Leo D. Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils (325-787): Their History and Theology* (Liturgical Press, 1983); in particular see chapters five and six, which deal with the Councils of Chalcedon and Constantinople II, where monophysitism was one of the central points of contention. See also the contributions in Kenneth Parry, ed., *The Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity*, which discusses on a case-by-case basis the distinctions between the various Eastern and Oriental Churches, including Eastern Catholic Churches like the Maronites.

<sup>19</sup> Mario Amato, also known as Mario Romano, was a Sicilian Jesuit who entered the society in Naples in 1561, taking his final vows in 1571. As mentioned in Chapter Two, he was Eliano and Raggio’s companion to Lebanon, and was a witness to Tommaso Raggio’s regular outbursts. He had only a minor role in Lebanon, and did not seem to be a major player in Egypt either.

<sup>20</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 II, f.60r./MPOIV.36. “hora che di nuovo più volte havendo trattato con li medesimi et col patriarcha, li trovo similmente tanto duri et fundati in queste lor heresie, che ardisco dir che sarà quasi impossibile.”

him. He acknowledged that he had great faith in Cardinal Carafa, but it was Eliano's project and he desired to be there.<sup>21</sup> So much so, that when discussing his possible return to Rome, Eliano explained he and Amato would prefer to return via Sicily or Naples, not Venice, as travel through the Most Serene Republic was longer and more grueling.<sup>22</sup> Eliano did conclude the letter with a small concession: he asked his superior, if Eliano is required to stay in Egypt, to send along a Jesuit who was well-versed in Coptic theology, someone who was able to deal with their heresies and understood how to make them either change their views or make their views more compatible with the Chalcedonian and Roman formulae.<sup>23</sup> Overall, however, after a month Eliano remained quite negative about the future of the mission.

Over the course of December, Eliano and Amato continued their discussions with the Copts. By the end of the month, Eliano was more optimistic, though his negativity was still quite apparent. While he believed it would be quite difficult to convince the Copts of their own ignorance and to alter their views, he saw their willingness to continue meeting with him and Amato as a positive sign, one that could potentially lead to a change in their views. This hope spurred Eliano to spend much of the time reading the Copts' books in order to see if a possible way could be found to bridge the two theologies and to make Coptic and Catholic Christologies compatible. Also positive for Eliano was the Copts' abandonment of infant circumcision; Eliano was told that the Copts had ceased the practice in 1563, one of the few positive results of his first visit. While only a small change, seeing that his first mission was not a total failure gave Eliano hope that this time around could potentially bring greater successes, perhaps culminating in the integration of the Copts into the arms of the Roman Church.

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<sup>21</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 60r./MPOIV.36. "però sottometto ogni mio pensiero alla santa obedientia."

<sup>22</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 60v./MPOIV.37. "Perchè siamo molto più vicini è più facile il viaggio per Cicilia, penso venir per quella via o per via di Napoli, se ci capitasse qualche nave, e non andar per Venezia, perché quel viaggio è molto più faticoso et più longo."

<sup>23</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 60v./MPOIV.38.

Eliano's mixed feelings about the mission continued in his end-of-the-year report sent to Acquaviva. While he still felt the Copts' willingness to meet was a positive sign and he felt he was receiving only the best support from Paolo Mariani and the rest of the French, he nevertheless saw the many theological differences as a potentially impenetrable impasse. At points, Eliano carries on *ad nauseam* about the Copts' views, repeating almost verbatim what he had already explained in previous letters. Eliano often dove into hyperbole, such as how "the greatest ignorance reigns over all of them" and if one of their youths had mastered reading and writing, he was taken for a literary genius; and he lambasted the Coptic leaders for seeing the pope as nothing more than the first bishop among equals.<sup>24</sup> These issues, among others, "are the great difficulties that I have not penetrated so far," and Eliano was not sure he ever would. Eliano explained he did not wish to lose hope for the mission, but the state of affairs at the beginning of 1583 were hardly positive.<sup>25</sup> Eliano felt that if they were ever to have success with the mission, it would take much time and dedication, and probably more Jesuits, as the Copts' intransigence would require a concerted effort from more than just himself and Amato. Eliano then suggested to Acquaviva that, "if you judge otherwise," and deemed the Coptic mission far too difficult for the Jesuit man-hours it would require, Eliano and Amato would not delay their return to Italy, freeing Eliano to work on the Maronite book project; after all, "those poor Maronites are with great desire awaiting the printing of their ecclesiastical books that we have amended in Syria."<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 68v./MPOIV.45. "Regna tra di loro tutti comunemente grandissima ignorantia, non havendo schole per insegnar putti; et quando uno sa ben legger et scriver presso di loro è tenuto per un gran literato; che è causa anche che sono poco capaci dele ragioni et authorità delle sacre lettere."

<sup>25</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 68v./MPOIV.45. "pur non voglio desperar di loro, quando si usasse verso loro la debita diligentia, "quia manus Domini non est abbreviata". Et quando altro non si facesse, si guadagnaria il merito dela santa obedientia."

<sup>26</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 68v./MPOIV.46. "Ma se altrimenti giudicasse, che a me (parlando sensualmente) saria più grato, che noi tardassimo, sarà anche ben di farcelo intender quanto prima, acciò non si perda tempo, sendo

Acquaviva shared Eliano's mixed sentiments. In a letter dispatched for Cairo, Acquaviva explained that if the mission looked promising, he would see to it that the mission received whatever aid was necessary for its success. However, Acquaviva also understood that the Copts were not like the Maronites, who had requested help from Rome. The Father General explained to Eliano, trusting his judgment, that should he deem the situation so dire that remaining in Egypt were fruitless, he should abandon the mission with his and Cardinal Carafa's blessings; of course, this potential push to abandon the mission did not include Santa Severina, who surely would not have approved of discarding something so dear to him so soon after its start.<sup>27</sup> And much of January saw this same pessimism. On 25 January, Eliano again wrote to Acquaviva asking if he could return to Rome, reminding him that the Maronite book project was his passion (and this mission was not). Eliano, pithily, then quipped: "I always find myself ready for whatever will be ordained for me, whether I am to return or to stay; may it all be for the greater service of God."<sup>28</sup> Eliano never missed a moment to prove his dexterity or his obedience, even if it went against his better judgment.

### **Coordinating the mission**

In the meantime, Acquaviva and Santa Severina tasked themselves with ensuring that the mission carried forward. For his part, Acquaviva made certain that Eliano received the help he

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che il poveri Maroniti stanno con grande desiderio aspettando si stampino li lor libri ecclesiastici che noi havemo emendato in Soria, da quali par dependa la stabilità de tutte le fatiche che in quelle parti havemo fatto."

<sup>27</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 70r./MPOIV.49. "Al ricevere di questa, credo che Vostra Riverenza havrà scoperto quel che si possa fare. Et però s'ella non ha trovata buona dispositione per far frutto, l'Illustrissimo Carafa mi ha detto che subito potrà tornarsene in Italia. Se anche le cose danno buona speranza d'haver a riuscire a buon termine, potrà fermarsi et avisarci minutamente d'ogni cosa che si manderà di qua quell'altro padre, et si procurerà quel tanto che da lei sarà proposto et si giudicherà che sia per aiutar la missione."

<sup>28</sup> ARSI, *Ital.* 157, f. 17r./MPOIV.50. "Se ben grandemente bramo di ritornar per causa della stampa per li libri de Maroniti, non ho potuto mancar per mio scarico di non avisar quello che scrivo, acciò non resti ingannato delle proprio passione, sempre trovandomi pronto a quanto mi sarà ordinato, o che ritorni, o che io resti; il tutto sia a maggior servitio di Dio."

needed in the form of a theologian. Acquaviva selected the young Neapolitan, Francesco Sasso. Recognized for his erudition in theology, Sasso was seen as an excellent choice to assist Eliano in his efforts to scour Coptic texts for theological errors.<sup>29</sup> Despite his high intellect, however, Sasso was only thirty-one at the time of his dispatch from Atri in Abruzzo. Moreover, like his predecessors Cristóbal Rodríguez, Tommaso Raggio, and Giovanni Bruno, Sasso knew no Arabic; he would have to rely on Eliano's translations of complex Coptic theological works in order to grasp them fully.<sup>30</sup> However, at the time, Sasso's imminent arrival gave the mission a glimmer of promise. In fact, Santa Severina thought Sasso was an excellent choice because of his age. Santa Severina was confident that Sasso's deep knowledge of theology and his youthful fervor would greatly assist Eliano in his work. The cardinal also explained that Sasso was travelling with the books Eliano had requested, books that Eliano believed would expedite the process of teaching the Copts proper Catholic doctrine.<sup>31</sup> The cardinal continued by explaining that Gregory had sent a bill of exchange to Paolo Mariani for 1300 scudi, 1000 of which would go toward freeing Christian slaves; the remainder was for Eliano to use as he saw fit. Gregory also financed Sasso's voyage, ensuring that the theologian arrived in Egypt as quickly as possible.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> ARSI, *Neap.* 2, f. 177r./MPOIV.53.

<sup>30</sup> For more on Sasso, see Charles Libois's brief biographical sketch in MPOIV.442. Enrique García Hernán also refers to Sasso as an "expert Jesuit," but an expert of what he does not say. See Enrique García Hernán, "The Holy See, the Spanish Monarchy and Safavid Persia in the Sixteenth Century: Some Aspects of the Involvement of the Society of Jesus," in *Iran and the World in the Safavid Age*, edited by Willem Floor and Edmund Herzig (I.B.Tauris, 2012), 186. Likewise, in his very brief discussion of this mission, Alastair Hamilton claims that Sasso was "as rigid a dogmatist as (Cristóbal) Rodríguez." See Hamilton, *The Copts and the West, 1439-1822*, 69.

<sup>31</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 74r./MPOIV.57-58. "Il quale ha fatto venire di Napoli il Padre Francesco Sasso, theologo, che hora s'invia a Lei, et sarà il presentatore di questa e della presente spedizione, accioché possa aiutare la Reverentia Vostra in questa missione et, per quanto si può, a rendere capaci cotesti Cophti, et indurli a conoscere et abbracciar la pura et sana dottrina. Et esso Padre Francesco porta seco ancora quei libri ch'ella scrive doversi mandare costà."

<sup>32</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 74rv./MPOIV.58. The order of payment from Pope Gregory XIII to the Florentine merchant, Francesco Biffali, for 1300 scudi is dated 30 January 1583. It is inventoried in the Archivio di Stato di Roma in *Camerale I*, 153, f. 60v. Santa Severina explains in his letter to Eliano, that the pope sent him the 100



In addition to financing it, Gregory also took an active role in coordinating the mission. Soon after Santa Severina's letter to Eliano, in late February 1583, Gregory sent three papal briefs to Cairo that gave the Jesuits unilateral authority in his name. The first was addressed to Eliano and Sasso (who would not arrive until August). It contained general directions for the mission and gave them the power of papal nuncios, essentially equaling their authority with his own, and giving them the authority to preside over a synod.<sup>33</sup> A second brief announced to Europeans in Egypt the pontiff's request to assist the pair however they could. Stressing the need for Christian charity and the missionaries' desires to carry out the will of God, Gregory's pronouncement was intended to work in tandem with the diplomatic infrastructure and the Latin (mainly French) community of Cairo, which Gregory recognized as essential to the mission's success.<sup>34</sup> The third brief was addressed to Patriarch John. Evoking the authority of the apostles Peter and Paul, Gregory announced that he had sent Eliano and Sasso to spread the Catholic faith and promote all matters of the Christian religion. He stressed the truth of their doctrine and hoped that the Copts would welcome Eliano and Sasso, as they strove to serve the will of God.<sup>35</sup> Combined, these briefs encapsulate in some sense Gregory XIII and the early modern papacy itself. In just three short pages of manuscript, Gregory dispatched missionaries, ordered Europeans to assist them by all means necessary, and beseeched John to accept the missionaries'

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scudi and then he passed it along to Sasso; no bill of exchange for the 100 scudi financing Sasso's voyage seems to exist.

<sup>33</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f.89r-90v./MPOIV.59-62.

<sup>34</sup> ASV, *Secr. Brev.* 56, f. 95rv./MPOIV.64. For more on this infrastructure and its role in shaping Ottoman Cairo, albeit for the seventeenth century, see Raoul Clément, *Les français d'Égypte aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Cairo: Impr. de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1960).

<sup>35</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 II, f. 95rv./MPOIV.62-63. "Mandavimus dilectissimis filiis Baptistae Eliano et Francisco Saxo Societatis Jesu professoribus, ut nonnulla ad catholicam religionem spectantia fraternitati tuae nomine nostro exponerent. Quare hortamur te in Deo Domino ut plenam fidem adhibeas his quae iidem Baptista et Franciscus tibi ex parte nostra hactenus exposuerunt, quaeque iidem Baptista et Franciscus adhuc exponent et dicent de rebus ad christianam religionem atque catholicam fidem pertinentibus ac pro Dei honore atque servitio et Christifidelium animarum salute, et illos eorumque salutaria monita libenter audias, certus, si id feceris, quod omnipotenti Deo rem gratam atque acceptabilem facias, et illius ac beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum eius promereberis benedictionem."

efforts to reform Coptic theology. He recognized that the process of evangelization had to work in tandem with the mechanisms of diplomatic exchange and the geo-political equilibrium of the early modern world. By going through the proper channels, Gregory demonstrated his savvy as both a spiritual leader and an early modern politician.<sup>36</sup>

Likewise realistic was Acquaviva. Acquaviva recognized the stark differences between this mission and the union achieved at the Council of Florence. While in that case the Greeks sought Western aid in the decades leading up to the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Copts had made no such overtures. Acquaviva also understood that the union struck at Florence carried little weight outside of the Catholic world. If real union was to be achieved, it would take full recognition by entire communities of the theological, ecclesiological, and Christological changes that Eliano and Sasso were to propose. Furthermore, Acquaviva recognized that Sasso's role as theologian alone would be insufficient, and he should be charged as Eliano's council and confessor, which gave Eliano the spiritual aid he needed as superior of the mission.<sup>37</sup> Acquaviva then reminded Eliano that he and Sasso should lead by example. Reminding Eliano of his troubles with Tommaso Raggio, Acquaviva wanted Eliano and Sasso to demonstrate the truth of the faith through dedication to the mission and through righteousness in their comportment, particularly with one another.<sup>38</sup> Likewise Acquaviva also realized they would need to meet their

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<sup>36</sup> For more on the give and take of the papacy as both a religious and political institution in the early modern period, see Paolo Prodi, *The Papal Prince*. Also of note are various contributions to James Corkery and Thomas Worcester, eds., *The Papacy Since 1500: From Italian Prince to Universal Pastor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), in particular Frederic J. Baumgartner, "Julius II: Prince, Patron, Pastor" (pp. 12-28). Cf. also Anthony D. Wright, *The Early Modern Papacy: From the Council of Trent to the French Revolution, 1564-1789* (Harlow, England: Longman, 2000) and William V. Hudon, "The Papacy in the Age of Reform, 1513-1644," in *Early Modern Catholicism: Essays in Honour of John W. O'Malley, S.J.*, edited by Kathleen M. Comerford, and Hilmar M. Pabel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 46-66.

<sup>37</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 101r./MPOIV.89. "Habbiamo dato al padre [Sasso] carico di esser consultore, monitore et confessore di Vostra Reverenza, con la facoltà necessaria, accioché con questa communicatione meglio si nutrisca l'unione."

<sup>38</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 101rv./MPOIV.89. "La quale il più che posso raccomandando a tutti. Et se le cose passate nell'altra missione mi furono cagione di qualche scontento, questo desidero, Padre mio, che riesca intorno al particolar presente così compita, che non vi manchi niente. Confido, ch'io sarò consolato in questo mio desiderio;

missionary targets halfway; rather than reminding them of past submissions to Rome (which included not a single Copt), Acquaviva insisted that “the truth will be better considered” if Eliano wrote treatises in Arabic that stressed the links between the theologies of the two churches.<sup>39</sup> The result would then be a union built on collaboration and mutual trust rather than the type of union Gregory and Santa Severina envisioned, one forced upon the Copts through a synod directed by Rome; that was, afterall, why Florence failed.

In the interim, while Sasso prepared for his departure from Italy, Eliano and Amato continued to spread their roots in Cairo. One of their first successes was the conversion of three Copts whom Eliano described as “very honored and esteemed by all.” Eliano hoped that these types of conversions would be looked upon positively by the rest of the community, and the patriarch in particular, which would push union into a more favorable light.<sup>40</sup> If so, Eliano believed, it was conceivable that in some time he would be able to call a synod to address bridging theological differences.

Then, without any semblance of a segue, Eliano’s letter took an odd turn into a personal story of déjà vu. He began: *Quod timui, hoc evenit mihi*, “what I feared has come upon me.” After this reference to Job 3:25, Eliano continued to say that “the greatest difficulty that I had in coming here, lest an obstacle be placed before this mission, was the preoccupation of not being known by the Jews in order that I not be forced into some entanglement by them as I was the

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perché dal canto di Vostra Reverenza mi prometto molto, dal canto del Padre Sasso ancora aspetto assai; i fratelli poi non potranno se non seguire il buon esempio delle Reverenze Vostre. Così da tutte le parti mi vengono buone speranze.”

<sup>39</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 101v./MPOIV.89-90. “Lo scrivere qualche trattato nella lor lingua, sì come Vostra Riverenza discorre bene, ci pare buona strada per far frutto, perché così la verità potrà esser meglio considerata. Et a questa fatica potrà molto bene aiutare il Padre Sasso per la dottrina che tiene.”

<sup>40</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 103r./MPOIV.93. “Hora mi occorre dirli che attendo in tanto a guadagnar alcuni di costoro con trattar con lor privatamente et farli capaci della verità; sì come ne sono fatti capaci tre delli buoni, un frate et un prete et un secolar, tutti tre assai honorati et di stima presso tutti, quali più al meno... Spero che con questi se ne guadagneremo delli altri particolari, che saranno sufficienti col favor divino di ottener anche li universal assieme col patriarca.”

other time, when I was here with Father Rodríguez of good memory.”<sup>41</sup> One day, Eliano had a run-in with a random Jew who recognized him and explained that he was certain he knew Eliano’s sister. Eliano reluctantly agreed to meet her, even as his fears mounted that his presence in Egypt would again result in a Jewish conspiracy. Unlike the divisive meeting with his mother, however, this was a heartfelt reunion. Forty-five years old and married now, Eliano’s sister (he never gives her name) cried upon seeing her brother, explaining in between tears how she had longed to see him for some time. Speaking in German, a language they learned in their youth, they reminisced and made up for lost time as best they could, though thirty years was a lot to recapture. At some point in the conversation, she assuaged Eliano’s fears of how the Jews would react to his presence in Cairo by telling him that he was safe there and that the Jews understood he was “an important man to the pope and could do great harm and great help to the Jews if he wished.” Meeting her after so much time must have weighed on Eliano, whose Jewish past always remained at the fore of his life. He never let on if it bothered him though; he simply felt that “we shall see what the end shall be. I leave it all to divine providence,” and that seems to be where Eliano left it.<sup>42</sup>

One of the tasks that seems to have fallen on Eliano was working with Christian prisoners and slaves as their confessor. One day, while hearing confession, Eliano encountered a slave named Petro Marco, who claimed to be a Catalan Jesuit. Eliano provides little biographical information save the fact he was once a companion of Francis Borgia and was on his way to India when he was captured, but Eliano took it upon himself to petition Acquaviva for 130 scudi

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<sup>41</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 I*, f. 103v./MPOIV.94. “Quod timui, hoc evenit mihi, dico che la maggior difficoltà che havevo di venir qua per non esser posto ostacolo a questa missione, era il timor di non esser da Judei conosciuto acciò non mi sia fatto qualche garbuglio da loro come mi fu fatto l’altra volta, quando qui fui con la bona memoria del P. Rodríguez.”

<sup>42</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 I*, f. 103v./MPOIV.94-95. Anzi mi ha detto che non mi ritiri dalli Judei quali tutti sanno di me, et non sono mai per darmi fastidio alcuno, sapendo ben, come dice che sete un grand’uomo presso il papa et potete far a Judei grande danno et grande utile se volete. Et così l’ho visto in effetto che mi fanno molto honore, et tutti mi mostrano buona ciera. Vederemo il fine qual sarà. Rimetto il tutto alla Provedentia divina.”

in order to secure Marco's manumission. A week later, seeing the peril that his fellow Jesuit was in, he took it upon himself to borrow the 130 scudi from European merchants in hopes his master would free him; the alternative was that Marco would be shipped off to Constantinople, or perhaps the galleys, where Eliano would surely be unable to free him. He asked Acquaviva to send the money soon, as his creditors would soon expect recompense for the debt accrued.<sup>43</sup>

Eliano also delved into Coptic books in preparation for the synod he hoped to convene in the near future. One of his goals was to find similarities in doctrine in order to demonstrate to the Copts that the differences between themselves and Rome were purely a matter of interpretation. Eliano noted the presence of "many truths and Catholic propositions" in their books that "they either do not read or do not consider while reading" due to "their carelessness and ignorance." For Eliano, the differences were not doctrinal, but how the Copts expressed their beliefs. Eliano believed that when the Copts confessed that "Christ our Lord is the divine incarnate Word (as they affirm), they are saying that in Christ there are two natures," and are acknowledging that in Christ is "true humanity and true divinity." However, they refused to express this, because of their fear of falling into Nestorian heresy. Eliano believed that it would be reckless to force this issue, at least for now. He much preferred to let the Copts keep their current view, as he saw it as a different way of expressing the same doctrine. While it would be ideal for them to conform completely, acknowledging it as a difference in declaration rather than belief was a workable temporary compromise for Eliano and would keep hopes for the mission alive.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 113r./MPOIV.103. "Per il che ho fatto ogni diligentia con pigliar detta summa imprestito da certi nostri amorevoli mercanti, et spero che fra pochi giorni sarà al tutto liberato. Per tanto Vostra Paternità mi facci grazia che siano rimessi almeno 100 cechini qua, acciò io possi satisfar a creditori di essi. Et fu necessario di far questo subito, perché era pericolo che, dovendosi partir suo patrone di qua con altri 140 schiavi, non capitasse più in queste bande, dovendo esso patrone andar a Constantinopoli et inde ad altri parti per mare, sendo lui patrone di diverse galere del Turcho."

<sup>44</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 114r./MPOIV.106. "Ma poichè tengono la verità, confessando espressamente esser in Christo Signor Nostro vera umanità et vera divinità, dicono che se li potria permetter, dicessero che Christo Nostro Signore è Verbo Divino incarnato nella Persona Divina, ovvero altre propositioni equivalenti, quali in vero (come essi

Throughout much of May and June, Eliano and Amato dedicated themselves to the preliminary work necessary for the synod. Previously quite skeptical in the prognosis for the mission, Eliano began to take a more positive stance. While many of his Catholic allies within Cairo thought he was swimming upstream in his efforts with the Copts, Eliano remained confident that this would be what fifteenth-century Western Christendom had hoped the Council of Florence would have been: the full acceptance of Roman primacy by an entire Eastern Christian community. In part, this was due to the assistance of his protector and patron, Paolo Mariani. Eliano had only the greatest of praise for Mariani when he wrote to Acquaviva in mid May. He explained that because of Mariani and his associates, there was great hope for the mission. Eliano referred to the letter Paolo Mariani had written to him when he was still in Tripoli in the fall of 1582, when Mariani had eagerly awaited Eliano's arrival and believed that work with the Copts was not only a possibility, but would surely end better than it had in the 1560s.<sup>45</sup> Mariani's close relationship with the Copts had greatly benefitted Eliano, as they always eagerly welcomed a friend of Mariani, even if they refused to change their minds on matters of faith. Eliano also spent much of the next two months working with learned Copts and examining their books. He even recognized that their most Catholic books were also the very books that the Copts would never refute; the problem was that they denied these Catholic truths, as Eliano saw it, because of "their ignorance and for not striving to study the books of the saints." Eliano was

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affermano) diriano che in Christo sono due nature, se non temessero cascar nella hersia di Nestorio che confessava che in Christo erano due nature et due persone. Pensano che ogni natura habbi la sua personalità, non penetrando che la unione è hipostatica nella persona divina. Et si vede dalli lori detti che la questione è più tosto de nomine che de re. Et giudicarei che saria bene concederli o condescender con loro per adesso che non dichino questa propositione, cioè due nature in Christo, tutta volta che dicessero et confessassero un'altra equivalente..."

<sup>45</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 106v./MPOIV.108. "Col magnifico Mariani, cugino del clarissimo console in casa del quale habito, si mandarono le lettere del reverendissimo patriarca dei Cophti, in compagnia di una che mi mandò per homo a posta a Tripoli et altre del clarissimo console, dalle quali, come anche dalle mie haranno hauto piena luce della buona speranza che ci davano del far buon frutto in questa vasta natione." Mariani's letter to Eliano is inventoried as ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 53r-54v./MPOIV.22-23.

working daily to fix this, but eradicating what he and Amato saw as centuries of ignorance was a tall task, even for the most seasoned missionary.<sup>46</sup>

Also problematic was a rumor spreading throughout Egypt that Giovanni-Paolo Caimo, a Milanese monsignor attached to the household of Archbishop Carlo Borromeo, had come to Egypt on pilgrimage with designs to steal the relics of Saint Macarius from the area known as Wadi El Natrun, the center of late-antique Egyptian monasticism. Macarius, known as the Lamp of the Desert, lived in the fourth century and was one of the most venerated of the desert fathers among the Copts, on par with Anthony the Great and Pachomius. Relic theft was anything but a new practice in the Christian world, having been a common occurrence throughout the Middle Ages. And it surely would have provided a boost for the archdiocese of Milan and brought great prestige to the already powerful Ambrosian Church. But it would have also signaled the end for the mission; the Copts would have seen the theft as yet another Roman attempt to undermine the autonomy of the Coptic church, ending any hope for the synod and for unity.<sup>47</sup> Eliano explained to Acquaviva that Caimo was adamant about stealing the relics, and would stop at nothing to steal what the Copts called the “column of the monasteries of the desert.” Eliano was also worried that if the patriarch so wished, he could use this episode to close the community off from Eliano, the French, and even from Mariani.<sup>48</sup> Eliano explained that he did all he could to prevent

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<sup>46</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 106v./MPOIV.109. “Poi che, oltre le pratiche fatte con diversi, havemo giudicato per molto spediente il passar lor libri autentici de quali trovando le propositioni catholiche che essi negano per la lor ignorantia et per non attender a studiar i libri de santi, havemo amplo campo di aquistarli, si come havemo fatto fin hora. Et andiamo cotidianamente facendo la copia de quali che fin hora havemo trovate.”

<sup>47</sup> Words of wisdom attributed to Macarius are included in Benedicta Ward, *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1975), 124-138. For more on the development of monasticism and its importance for early Christianity, cf. Peter H. Görg, *The Desert Fathers: Anthony and the Beginnings of Monasticism* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011). For a more general discussion of the late-antique world and the role of Christianity in it, cf. Averil Cameron, *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity, AD 395-600* (London: Routledge, 1993), particularly pp. 71-75 on “Monks, Ascetics and Holy Men.”

<sup>48</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 116r./MPOIV.113-114. “Questa fama fu sparsa qui nel Cairo da diversi, innanzi che esso Monsignor di qua partisse per il monasterio, da donde poteva facilmente pervenir all’orechie del Reverendissimo Patriarca de Cofiti et suoi. Et io, considerando che se questo santo corpo fosse stato levato, ne saria sequito gran confusione et disturbo, et fattosi questi popoli con il lor patriarca alieni et nemici di Franchi, il che a noi

Caimo from seizing the relics, and the Copts also did their part in preventing the furtive removal of Macarius's remains. But in the process Eliano, always preoccupied with how he was viewed by the upper echelons of the Church, feared that he made a potential enemy with a high-ranking cleric who could cause trouble for him: "[Caimo] and his companions showed themselves so averse toward me, maybe with the desire to want to lament about me to Your Paternity or to others."<sup>49</sup> Knowing how powerful the Milanese archbishop and his retinue were, Eliano asked Acquaviva to defend him should any issues arise, lest his motives be questioned by Gregory or others. It seems, however, that this episode ended without issue.<sup>50</sup>

Once the affair concerning the attempt to abduct Macarius had passed, Eliano rededicated himself to what he saw as "the most efficacious means of all" for gaining union: reading Coptic books and figuring out the best way to fix either the texts themselves or how they were interpreted. Eliano was also shocked with the dearth of letters from Rome. Having not received a letter since March (it was now June), Eliano was not sure where the mission was heading. He had several concerns. First, as with most missions, was money. Eliano was forced to borrow money from Mariani and his associates while he awaited bills of exchange from Rome to finance the mission.<sup>51</sup> The other concern was Mario Amato. Often ill and discontented, Amato had

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non saria tornato di alcune bene, et maxime hora che in io tratto con lor della unione di questa natione con Santa Chiesa Romana, et le cose già stanno in qualche buona dispositione..."

<sup>49</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 116rv./MPOIV.114. "La quale ricevuta, esso Monsignor, parendoli forse che il fosse causa che non ottenesse suo pensiero, alla presentia de molti in colera strazzò detta lettera; et così, ritornato qua, non potendo far altro, perché quelli del monasterio ne erano avertiti dal medesimo abate, che per questo di qua sene andò subito al monasterio, "lui et suoi Compagni si sono mostrati alquanto aversi da me, forse con animo di volersi lamentar di me presso la Paternità Vostra o altri."

<sup>50</sup> For further background on relic theft, cf. Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978). While it is a study of the Holy Land, Oded Peri's *Christianity Under Islam in Jerusalem: The Question of the Holy Sites in Early Ottoman Times* (Leiden: Brill, 2001) is an excellent study of how Christian holy sites fit within Ottoman society. While much of what Peri has to say about sites in the Holy Land does not apply to Christian holy sites in Egypt, the seamless integration of these sites into the Ottoman world is of particular note here.

<sup>51</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 125r./MPOIV.129. "Sono stato forzato di pigliar novi denari per una di cambio perché non havevo ricevuto tutti li primi, sì come più largamente ne scrivo al Illustrissimo Cardinale Santa Severina."



become a distraction for Eliano, and he believed that sending him back to Rome in exchange for a more dedicated (and healthier) companion would do great wonders for the mission.<sup>52</sup> Eliano also felt hamstrung. The absence of directions from Acquaviva and Santa Severina meant that it remained unclear if he was to remain in Egypt, and for how long. Also, without apostolic briefs (which had not yet been sent) giving him the requisite authority, calling a synod would be a grave contravention of authority. He nevertheless remained patient and confident in all this; he trusted Acquaviva and Santa Severina and strongly believed they would soon send him what he needed.<sup>53</sup>

Santa Severina also explained to Eliano the need for perseverance. He understood well that the Copts' errors were long entrenched in the community, had been the basis for their ability to differentiate themselves from others in Egypt, and would not simply evaporate because of Eliano and Sasso's erudition. He explained to Eliano that it would take much effort and dedication, and that he should not give up hope and should show courage in the face of opposition. He also reminded Eliano of Sasso's imminent departure. By June, Sasso was in Venice and would be departing shortly for Cairo. Also accompanying Sasso were those all-important apostolic briefs that conferred the authority to preside over a synod in the name of the Holy See.<sup>54</sup> Santa Severina had great hope for the mission once Sasso departed. But at the same time it was a delicate situation: the help of Mariani and the arrival of Sasso could bring the mission nothing but success; on the other hand the potential intransigence of the Copts and the

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<sup>52</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 108r./MPOIV.126. "Del resto stiamo con desiderio aspettar resolutione dele cose nostre; et se havessimo di fermar, già pregai Vostra Paternità si contentasse di cambiarmi il fratello Mario per le cause dette altre volte. Pur in tutto mi retto alla santa obedientia."

<sup>53</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 108r./MPOIV.125. "Et perché io non ho brevi apostolici né altro, non posso stringer il negocio; però aspetto il padre che Vostra Paternità mi promesse, se pur vorà che seguitiamo la missione."

<sup>54</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 I*, f. 119r./MPOIV.116.

fragile status of the Coptic community within Ottoman Egypt meant the mission was always one misstep away from failure.

Acquaviva likewise was excited about the prospects of the mission. Acquaviva was particularly pleased to have received a catalog of errors that Eliano found within the Coptic community. Acquaviva, always the pragmatist, believed that the mission should carry forward; but he also recognized that if it were fruitless, there would be little point in continuing. But he wanted Eliano to wait until Sasso arrived and they pursued all avenues with the Copts.<sup>55</sup> Acquaviva also had some positive news to report about the Maronite book printing project. No time had been lost on the project, as Cardinal Carafa was assiduous in seeing it through. Acquaviva had also sent a bill of exchange to Mariani for the two-hundred ducats that Eliano borrowed from his patron. Acquaviva also hoped that Mariani saw in Eliano and Sasso their gratitude and loving friendship for his efforts in helping the mission along, and that Mariani would continue to offer his assistance however and whenever he could. Acquaviva recognized that without Mariani, the mission would not have the support it needed, something that at times Gregory XIII and Santa Severina seemed to forget.<sup>56</sup> Part of Acquaviva's preoccupation with this was Eliano's past experiences in Egypt. While he understood that Eliano felt safe in Egypt this time around, much to Mariani's credit, and the threat of a Jewish conspiracy seemed unlikely, Acquaviva nevertheless was leery of the apparent tranquility all the same. While it may have

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<sup>55</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 122r./MPOIV.121. "Col Padre Francesco Sasso, qual poco fa' ci scrisse da Venetia ch'era per partirsi all'hora a cotesta volta, si scoprirà meglio che speranza vi sia di far profitto. Et quando non vi si veda dispositione, le Riverenze Vostre potranno tornarsene in Italia nel nome del Signore, si come per un'altra mia scrissi a Vostra Riverenza che m'havea detto l'Illustrissimo Cardinale Carrafa. Procureranno però di lasciar tutti quelli co' quali tratterano, talmente affetti verso questa Santa Sede, che se al presente non se ne potrà haver il fine che si pretende, resti almeno qualche preparatione ne gli animi per un'altra volta che forse alcuni vi tornassero."

<sup>56</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 122v./MPOIV.121. "Havrebbe aiuto qui la diligenza della Riverenza Vostra il negotio de i libri de Maroniti, s'ella si fusse trovata a Roma. Tuttavia non s'è perso tempo, perché l'Illustrissimo Carrafa ha dato cura ad alcuni che li rivegano acciò che poi si possano stampare. Al Signor Marian Mariani furono pagati senza dilatione i duecento cecchini conforme alla lettera di cambio che portava. Credo harà visto in noi gratitudine per l'amorevolezza usate da lui et dal Signor Paolo suo fratello verso le Riverenze Vostre et penso resteranno animati a continuarle."

seemed safe, Ottoman Cairo remained the physical setting of the “the memory of when you felt past dangers in other times,” which “leave us with fear.” Acquaviva did not want a repeat of the first mission, and believed a certain level of vigilance was in order.<sup>57</sup>

Despite this warning, Acquaviva remained hopeful and positive on the whole. In a letter to Francesco Sasso, at this point still in Venice, Acquaviva had high praise and well wishes for the imminently departing theologian. Acquaviva believed that Sasso would bring a much needed boost to a mission that had begun to turn stale.<sup>58</sup> Acquaviva also had some cautions that he wanted Sasso to keep in mind. First, he wanted Sasso to pay attention to their personal safety, Eliano’s in particular. He reminded Sasso of Eliano’s perils twenty years prior, and explained that it was essential to avoid danger and keep an eye out for Jewish plots. He also explained that it was imperative that they live within their means and only spend what was necessary for their health and for the benefit of the mission. Only part of this was purely financial, however. Acquaviva was fearful of the Jesuits appearing ostentatious, which could result in more threats. Lastly, they were to adhere to the goals of the mission and nothing more; Acquaviva did not want a repeat of the Eliano-Raggio affair of the 1570s.<sup>59</sup> In sum, these requests on Acquaviva’s part reflect both his hopes for the mission as well as his apprehensions. He believed Eliano and Sasso would work well together and had the proper assistance through Mariani. However, if the past was any indication, the mission could unravel in an instant. But before Sasso could engage

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<sup>57</sup> ARSI, *Gall* 98 I, f. 122r./MPOIV.121. “Ancorché Vostra Riverenza mi scriva che costì si trova assai in sicuro, tuttavia la memoria de pericoli passati altre volte da Lei in cotesti paesi ci fà stare con timore. Et perciò come non si manca di tener raccomandati tutti al Signore con orationi particolari, così le ricordo, poi che costì è molto conosciuta, si come s’intende, et n’ha trovato de suoi parenti, che vada molto circonspezza, né si fidi così d’ognuno. Nelle fatiche ancora temprirsi di maniera che le possa continuare. Avvertisca che il desiderio che tiene dell’aiuto de i parenti, non l’impedisca nel principale per cui è mandata costà.”

<sup>58</sup> ARSI, *Ven.* 2, f. 121r./MPOIV.123.

<sup>59</sup> ARSI, *Ven.* 2, f. 121r./MPOIV.124. “Vedere come stano sicuri nel Cairo, massime il Padre Battista, quale è conosciuto da gli Hebrei di quel paese, et l’altra volta fu in gran pericolo. Procurar che si vada riservatamente nello spendere, non patendo però nelle cose necessarie. Molto più avertire che non si faccia ostentatione di poter spender assai, che da questo non si genera loro qualche persecutione. Attendere da dovero alle cose della missione né per altri negotii che s’offriscano resti in modo alcuno impedito o ritardato il principale per che sono mandati. Avisar quanto prima in che termine stiano le cose, et che speranza vi sia di far frutto.”

in the theological debates that had been raging on between Eliano and the Copts, he had to get there. And so, with Sasso's departure from Venice on 25 June, the mission was at a standstill and Eliano waited. Work only resumed when Sasso set foot in Cairo on 12 August.

### **Francesco Sasso's arrival and the Synod of Memphis**

Francesco Sasso landed in Alexandria on 6 August. He arrived in Cairo six days later, and was warmly received by Eliano and his associates. The same day Eliano wrote to Acquaviva announcing his companion's safe arrival, and asked that Gregory be informed as well.<sup>60</sup> Finally having his companion pleased Eliano, as he now had a partner who would bring much-needed youthful vitality and theological precision to the mission. Eliano also at this point had received letters of instruction from Santa Severina, which provided him new enthusiasm for the mission. Paolo Mariani then escorted Eliano and Sasso to the residence of Patriarch John, where they presented to him Gregory's brief from late February announcing the pair as his vicars. John then embraced Eliano and asked him to interpret and translate the Latin brief into Arabic so that he could more readily comprehend the nature of the mission. Eliano believed that this would give Eliano and Sasso the necessary access to the Coptic community that was so essential to the mission's success.<sup>61</sup> While not surprised by the apprehension amongst the Copts, Eliano was

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<sup>60</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 124r./MPOIV.130. "Alli 6 di agosto 1583, arivò il Padre Sasso in Alexandria, et in al Cairo alli 12, per via di Constantinopoli. Fu scritto del suo arivo a Nostro Padre per la via di Constantinopoli alli 12 di agosto."

<sup>61</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 128r./MPOIV.136. "Sia lodato Dio che dopo quasi un anno che qui sono stato sospeso del star mio, sia finalmente arivato il Padre Sasso con suo compagno, sano et allegro, con gran animo di aiutar questa missione. Col quale ho ricevuto la gratissima di Vostra Reverenda Paternità, con quelle delli Illustrissimi Cardinali di Santa Severina et Carafa, et con la istruttione sua di detto Cardinale, quali vederemo, piacendo al Signore, servir ad unguem. Dopo tre giorni del arivo del padre andamo in compagnia del clarissimo console col breve di Sua Santità al Reverendissimo Patriarca quale troviamo solo. Et si ralegrò molo del arivo del padre et del breve, che ricevendo pose sopra la testa basciandolo. Volse che io l'aprisi et interpretasse il contenente, dopo mel lasciò acciò mettesse in scritto la sua interpretatione."

confident there would be a synod soon and that differences would be settled in the name of ecumenical union between the Copts and Rome.

In this regard, Eliano continued his work with Coptic books. In the meantime, Sasso and some companions traveled to Jerusalem on pilgrimage, which provided Eliano the freedom to work with the texts while still giving him hope that upon Sasso's return, they would carry forward with the mission. One of Eliano's goals while Sasso was away was to codify Coptic texts that he believed were in line with Catholic doctrine and send them to Rome alongside Latin translations; once in Rome, Acquaviva and Santa Severina would review and approve them in Gregory's name. Eliano believed that this would please both the Holy See and the Copts, as both the Copts and the pope would have an active role in creating the theological union that would then officially be signaled at the synod.<sup>62</sup>

Before there could be a synod, however, there was one major issue that needed to be addressed: Eliano was troubled by the absurd rate at which he was spending money. Eliano reported that between 22 September 1582 (the date he left Tripoli for Egypt) and the beginning of September 1583, he had spent an exorbitant sum, 8,552 ducats, a quarter of which went to expenses under the category "extraordinary expenses," without further elaboration.<sup>63</sup> Eliano was also shocked at the level of Sasso's expenses; within a month of his arrival only a small fraction

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<sup>62</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 128rv./MPOIV.137. "Retrovandosi hora buona commidit  et compagnia di certi che vanno a Jerusalem et ritornano, mi ha pregato il Padre Sasso lo lasciasse andar, perch  dopo pi  lesti attenderemo alla missione... In tanto io metto all'ordine le cose che ho cavato dalli libri de Cophti, quali molti li hanno piaciuto, sperando che con tal mezzo saranno facilmente convinti. Intendo hora a ridurle in buon ordine per haverle in pronto trattando con loro. Veder  di mandar una copia tradotta con il suo arabico a Roma, acci  Vostra Paternit  et li altri si consolono di tante belle verit  che contengono detti libri, quali questi Cophti per ignorantia et trascuragine non leggono et legendo non lo considerando."

<sup>63</sup> Inventoried as ARSI *Gall. 98 II*, f. 216v is an expense sheet with a detailed breakdown of where Eliano's money went. The total sum is given in 214 Scudi Pontifici. The actual itemized count is in another currency and totals 8552. Eliano does not state the currency by name. But given that all letters of exchange were written in Venetian zecchini or ducats, and that in one letter Eliano claims it cost Sasso approximately 50 ducats (it is listed as just 59 in the expense report) it is almost certain that these numbers are in Venetian ducats. While it is unclear how Eliano calculated the conversion from ducats to scudi, 8552 ducats is nevertheless indeed an exorbitant sum of money to spend in one year for a mission.

of what he had when he left Rome remained. True, Eliano admitted, Sasso had to pay for some books and the one-hundred chalices they could not use. But Eliano had paid for expenses pertaining to Sasso's arrival, and Gregory financed the voyage; he was disheartened that Sasso had no expense list and that it was unclear exactly where the money went.<sup>64</sup> Eliano further lamented how much more expensive this mission would be than the mission to the Maronites and that this mission's budget was much tighter. He feared that unless the curia recognized the fiscal crisis they were in, the missionaries would go bankrupt before they could even get to the synod; this quibble over money was just another of the issues facing the sixteenth-century missionary.<sup>65</sup>

By late September, despite the problems with money, Eliano and Sasso were working well together in their preparations for the synod. This was in great part due to the work of Mariani, who had demonstrated himself a staunch ally of the Jesuits in their efforts with the Copts. Eliano and Sasso commended Mariani's efforts in a letter to Gregory XIII. They lauded his "piety and zeal" and his hard work in fostering bonds between the Jesuits and the patriarch. They hoped that this would continue alongside his efforts to safeguard the Copts from the Turks.<sup>66</sup> But for some, this was apparently insufficient. Mariani had recently received a letter from King Henry III in which the king voiced some doubts about Mariani's loyalty to the crown and his dedication to the French living in Egypt, in part due to the fact he was a Venetian.<sup>67</sup> But

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<sup>64</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 129rv./MPOIV.138. "Mi sono ben maravegliato assai che il Padre Sasso in questo viaggio habbi fatto tanto larga spesa, perché ha hauto 250 scudi da Roma, et non ne ha portato più di 25 cechini. Et io ho pagato qui alquante spese fatte per lui arivando qui. È vero che ha comprato alquanti libri et 100 calici, ma con tutto ciò mi par che si è largato troppo. Non mi ha dato la lista delle spese fatte se ben dice di haverle notate."

<sup>65</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 129v./MPOIV.138. "Et mi sono maravegliato che andando alli Maroniti, ci hanno dato 400 scudi con haver pagato tutte le altre spese di calici et paramenti, etc., sendo noi tre solamente, et hora che siamo quattro in paese dove più si spende, habbino dato non più de 300 scudi. Pur andaremo trattenendoci finché ne saranno et ne daremo avviso."

<sup>66</sup> APF, *Miscellanea Varie Ia*, f. 506r./MPOIV.143. "È tanta la pietà et zelo del Signor Paolo Mariani, console del Re Christianissimo in Egitto, verso la conversione de Cofiti, sono tali li favori et aggiunti che per amor et servitio di questa Santa Sede ci fa acciò conseguiamo il nostro intento, che è quanto Vostra Santità ci ha comandato intorno a detta conversione...."

<sup>67</sup> APF, *Miscellanea Varie Ia*, f. 506r./MPOIV.143. "Hora in questi giorni è venuto uno con lettere del Serenissimo Re di Francia nelle quali diceva che, per haver inteso come detto Paolo Mariani suo console in Egitto,

Eliano and Sasso did not believe this to be true at all; rather they believed that this judgment on the part of Henry III was the product of false rumors spread by Mariani's enemies, in particular Christopharo Vento, the former consul to Egypt. Eliano believed that if one asked the French merchants of Egypt, they would come to Mariani's defense and praise his efforts both on their behalf and with the Copts. Eliano and Sasso then asked Gregory to write to Henry, urging him to reconsider his stance on Mariani and recognize that keeping him as consul was good for France and for the mission.<sup>68</sup>

Likewise writing in support of Mariani was the Coptic patriarch. John wrote to Gregory in September 1583 explaining that the accusations lodged against Mariani depicting him as a disloyal servant of the French crown and a schemer out for personal gain were patently false. John explained that Mariani "has done great work with all sorts of Frankish and Coptic Christians, being very practical in all things, and he knows the state of all men better than almost anyone, and no one can do the good that he does with all Christians because of the compassion he has toward all, and all hearts uniformly love him."<sup>69</sup> Mariani himself also addressed the accusations of his disloyalty to Henry. After a warm greeting to Santa Severina and an offer of gratitude in response to the cardinal's praises for Mariani's efforts, Mariani explained to the cardinal that unfortunately his efforts with the Copts are being ignored and his name deprecated by Vento, a man he referred to as a "bad Christian who has related some falsehood in order to

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per esser Venetiano non si portava ben con le nationi, et maxime con la sua di Francia, per questo se la cosa era così, lo rivava di consolato et costituiva quest'altro in suo loco."

<sup>68</sup> APF, *Miscellaneae Varie* Ia, f. 506rv./MPOIV.143. "...se sarà favorito con una lettera di Vostra Beatitudine al Serenissimo di Francia, che non vogli per una mala relatione de malevoli togliere il consolato da questo gentil'huomo, il quale ha con tanta fedeltà servito a detto Re, et con tanta pieta promosso et favorito le cose de nostra santissima fede in queste parti di Egitto." There is also a letter from Eliano and Sasso to Acquaviva informing him of the situation with Mariani, in which they compel him to ask Gregory to write a letter to Henry III petitioning keeping Mariani as consul to Egypt. Cf. ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 134r.

<sup>69</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 95 III*, f. 204r./MPOIV.149. "faceva opere buone con ogni sorte de Christiani Franchi et Cofiti, sendo molto pratico in tutte le cose, et conosce il stato de tutti li huomini meglio che qualsevoglia altro, né nessuno che potria far il bene che lui fa con tutti li Christiani, per la sua compassione che ha verso tutti, et li cuori de tutti uniformamente li amano."

remove me from this consulate.”<sup>70</sup> Mariani hoped that the cardinal would see the truth of the matter, and he reassured the cardinal that he would continue to help Eliano and Sasso in their work with the Copts so long as he was able.

At this point in the mission, these developments introduce some of the issues related to the confessional politics of early modern Europe that would cause the undoing of the mission when Mariani was recalled from his post. The fourth son of King Henry II and Catherine de’ Medici, Henry III was never supposed to be king. However, he assumed the throne at twenty-two years of age from his brother, Charles IX, who died without an heir. His coronation was overshadowed by the French wars of religion, as Huguenots and Catholics fought for influence throughout France. The young Henry’s principal goals were positioning the Church under his authority and consolidating royal power as the ultimate political authority in France. This was essential for confessional cohesion in France and for the institutionalization of the crown as the central mechanism of the state.<sup>71</sup> Part of this was having royal officials loyal to the crown and no one else; this of course included foreign diplomats. If Henry was to present himself as a powerful monarch to his chief ally, the Ottoman sultan, it was imperative to have a diplomatic retinue that demonstrated allegiance and trustworthiness to the French king. The idea of a renegade diplomat benefitting personally from his post certainly would have troubled Henry, as it would undermine

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<sup>70</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 139r./MPOIV.150-151. “mi è sopragionto qualche impedimento per causa de qualche mal Christiano che ha dato relatione del falso, per cavarmi di questo consolato che, quanto al mio particular, molto poco mi importarebbe ma per l’authorità del ufficio per quello che si può giovar a questa natione cofta mene dispiacerebbe, perché col molto giovamento che seli fa, tanto più sono inclinati per accostarsi al disegno nostro.” Mariani does not name who this “mal christiano” is, but Charles Lebois, in his description of this letter, suggests it to be Christopharo Vento, who at this point was in France trying to reclaim his position as consul, therefore actively seeking Mariani’s removal.

<sup>71</sup> For more on religious culture in early modern France, cf. Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975); Katharine J. Lualdi, “Persevering in the Faith: Catholic Worship and Communal Identity in the Wake of the Edict of Nantes,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35, no. 3 (October 1, 2004): 717–734. For examinations of the place the wars of religion held in shaping monarchical policies, cf. Philip Benedict, “Un roi, une loi, deux fois: Parameters for the History of Catholic-Protestant Co-existence in France, 1555-1685,” in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, edited by Ole Peter Grell and R.W. Scribner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 65–93, and Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).



not only his authority but the perception of his authority from the perspective of the Ottomans. In the theatre of power politics, this would be damning for Henry's efforts to show that he was Sultan Murad III's peer. Therefore, if it appeared one of his representatives abroad were not one-hundred percent loyal to the crown, Henry had to act swiftly.

In the abstract, Henry's stance on this issue could work in the Jesuits' favor; as the self-proclaimed defender of the faith, Henry ideally should have sought to help the missionaries by ordering his diplomats to assist overseas missions. But in the same vein, if Henry did not trust his emissaries, it mattered very little how dedicated someone like Mariani was to the mission. It does not appear that Mariani actually did anything to undermine the crown's authority, except for the fact he was Venetian; as we will see below, there is sufficient testimony to demonstrate that never once did Mariani do anything that undermined Henry or contravened matters of state for personal gain. And that is why the real issue was the nature of the royal court itself and the importance of personal ties between Henry and those whom he trusted the most. Vento, who was at the royal court lobbying to be named consul, clearly was buzzing in the ear of the king. Vento sought to take advantage of his personal relationship with Henry, which appears to have been much stronger than Henry and Mariani's. Much like any courtier, Vento fought to better his position before the king in order to acquire more personal power. Obviously, that power was completely contingent upon Henry's willingness to grant it, and to maintain it. And this is what seemed to happen to Mariani; for whatever reason, whether it was Vento's petitioning or Mariani's Venetianness, perhaps both, Mariani's influence was diminishing, and sought desperately to maintain it, solely because Henry changed his mind. Such was the life of an early

modern diplomat caught in the nebulous theatre of court politics that was in so many ways dictated by the capriciousness of the king.<sup>72</sup>

The possibility of Mariani losing his post troubled Eliano and Sasso deeply; even though the Jesuits spent much of October preparing for the synod, Eliano remained unsure about the future of the mission. By the end of the month, Eliano again believed it might be best to return to Rome, suggesting that the uncertainty surrounding the mission and Mariani had compelled him to reconsider where and how his talents could be best used. In early November, Eliano welcomed a Maronite priest who had come to Egypt to promote the Maronites' desire to have Eliano continue his work with them.<sup>73</sup> This Lebanese priest explained to Eliano the community's desire for him to have an active role in the book printing project in Rome rather than have Cardinal Carafa head it. While they trusted the cardinal, they knew Eliano personally and felt more secure with him spearheading the project he had created. Eliano again suggested that it would perhaps be best to return to Rome and stop wasting his time in Egypt. Eliano firmly believed that Sasso and the titular bishop of Sidon, Leonardo Abel, were more than capable of heading up the mission without him.<sup>74</sup> Of course, Eliano also explained that he eagerly awaited instructions, and would remain in Egypt if that was the desire of his superiors; however, Eliano's preoccupations

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<sup>72</sup> For an examination of court culture, cf. John Adamson, *The Princely Courts of Europe: Ritual, Politics and Culture Under the Ancien Régime, 1500-1750* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999). Of course the most famous contemporary work on the life of the court and the courtier, which both Vento and Mariani would have been familiar, is Baldesar Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, trans by George Bull (London: Penguin, 1978).

<sup>73</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 153r./MPOIV.162. "Questi giorni passati capitò qua una Maronita con lettere da Soria, che mi avisavano qualmente Sua Santità, havendo firmo animo de promover le cose de Maroniti, havea fatto venir quell'huomo dotto et da bene, che noi menavamo con noi per causa della stampa, con menar seco altri religiosi per la chiesa che li ha dato, et putti per il colleggio, del che molto mi sono ralegrato."

<sup>74</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 153r./MPOIV.162. "Et perché quel chori Joanni che è andato per la stampa, dice che non li basta l'animo di far stampar quelli libri, che noi in Monte Libano havemo coretto, quali sono mandati a Roma, se non mi ritrovo io, per esser meglio informato, per esser notati et passati per mia mano... Onde se io dovessi ritornar, penso che fermandosi qui il Padre Sasso con il Vescovo Sidonio che da Mesopotamia havesse di venir qua et seguitar il negocio, potriano dar perfettione a questa missione, et far tutto quello che io havessi a far." Abel, originally from Malta, was named papal nuncio to the East and worked with the various communities of the Christian Orient. He was named bishop of Sidon, Lebanon, on 20 July 1582. For more on Abel, see *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, Vol I (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1912), 70-71.

with the Maronite question illuminate his apprehensions with the Coptic mission and his firm belief that, even with Sasso and Mariani's help, Egypt was not where he should have been.

By late November, despite Eliano's misgivings, the pair was able to report that Patriarch John had sent notice to the Coptic bishops announcing a synod to be held in Memphis at Christmas.<sup>75</sup> With a little more than a month to go, Eliano and Sasso had to work fast. To that end, Sasso set himself to the preparation of a treatise on dogma that stressed the key theological bonds between the Catholics and the Copts. Eliano spent the next month collating "the many truths collected from their books" in order that the Copts could see the similarities in doctrine and treat the synod as a formal acknowledgement of Romano-Coptic theological union. Likewise, the pair continually networked within the intellectual elite of the Coptic community, searching for learned clerics most amenable to siding with the Jesuits at the synod, thus easing their work as well as giving the synod that all-important semblance of ecumenical cooperation.<sup>76</sup>

But despite the promise of the synod that was just a month away, Eliano and Sasso remained skeptical because of the situation surrounding Mariani's status as consul. They knew that the synod was only occurring because of Mariani's friendship with the patriarch, and they feared that John's willingness to call his bishops to Memphis would only last so long as Mariani was involved. Convincing the Copts of their theological errors would be very difficult as it was; without Mariani the opportunity to do so would evaporate entirely. While, if removed, it was possible that Mariani's replacement could continue to support the Jesuits, the situation was unsettling for Eliano: "if [Mariani] were removed from this consulate as some have predicted,"

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<sup>75</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 154r./MPOIV.164. "Dopo che è arrivato qua il Padre Sasso, si ha incominciato a trattar della nostra missione. Et se ben al principio che il Reverendissimo Patriarca ha ricevuto il breve di Sua Santità, havea difficoltà de far cosa alcuna fin all'arrivo dela risposta delle sue scritte a Roma, nondimeno ultimamente si è risoluto col parer de suoi, a nostra chiesta, di voler far un sinodo per questo Natale; et già ha scritto per huomo a posta a detti vescovi che senza altro si ritrovino qui per trattar delle cose de santa fede."

<sup>76</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 154r./MPOIV.164.

and his replacement were “a Huguenot heretic,” or “at least not so Catholic and zealous as he is, things will go badly for us.”<sup>77</sup> Eliano’s fear of a Protestant or a bad Catholic (it is unclear which Eliano thought was worse) seeking to undermine the mission exhibits how confessionalizing impulses were at play even as far away as Cairo; and Eliano was well aware that his work could be undone by one of its most potent threats, the process of Protestant confession-building in France. While it would be another fifteen years before the Edict of Nantes would grant general toleration to Protestants in France, it was nevertheless clear by the 1580s that Protestantism was pervasive enough within France that the possibility of a “Huguenot heretic” assuming a royal diplomatic office (whether he be a crypto-Huguenot or not) was a frighteningly real threat, one that forced Eliano to contemplate ending the mission altogether.<sup>78</sup>

The fear of Mariani’s recall and who his replacement would be hung over the first two sessions of the Synod of Memphis, which John called to order on 17 December.<sup>79</sup> In the first two sessions that stretched over into the new year, the Jesuits focused on the Copts’ books, attempting to demonstrate that the chasm between their respective doctrines was not as wide as the Copts perceived. Somewhat shockingly for the Jesuits, the Copts again openly rejected both Rome and Chalcedon; Eliano believed it was because of their “bad opinion” of Roman Christology, which they perceived as Nestorian in its very basis, even though the Jesuits

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<sup>77</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II*, f. 154r./MPOIV.165. “Et se fosse levato da questo Consolato come hanno tentato alcuni, et in suo loco succedesse chi non sa la lingua né è pratico con costoro, et tal volta, se non heretico ugonotto, almeno non tanto catholico et zeloso come lui, le cose nostre anderiano male.”

<sup>78</sup> For further discussion on the development of Protestant confession-building in France, as well as its eventual deterioration in the seventeenth century, cf. Gregory Hanlon, *Confession and Community in Seventeenth-Century France*; Raymond A. Mentzer, *Blood & Belief: Family Survival and Confessional Identity Among the Provincial Huguenot Nobility* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1994); Mark Greengrass, “France,” in *The Reformation in National Context*, edited by R. W. Scribner, Roy Porter, and Teich Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 47-66. As Greengrass put it in regards the Edict of Nantes and its importance: “But the sacral basis of the French monarchy remained, and was strengthened by monarchical absolutism; the seeds of revocation were being sown at the same time as the edict of Nantes was being enforced” (62); Mentzer and Andrew Spicer, eds., *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World: 1559-1685*.

<sup>79</sup> The date for the synod is given in the final report of the mission, written 28 August 1585, from Rome. Cf. ARSI, *Gall. 98 I*, f. 312r.

reiterated over and over again their belief in the hypostatic union of Christ. Eliano grew agitated and frustrated that the patriarch “clearly demonstrated that he did not want to deal with and innovate anything,” and so the pair abandoned the synod, at least for the moment, and Eliano and Sasso deemed that it might be best to cut their losses.<sup>80</sup> The Jesuits also attempted to meet with Silvester, the Greek patriarch of Alexandria to see if there was any chance they could gain some headway with the often staunch Greeks. However, the patriarch was absent at the time. Eliano attempted to talk with the patriarchal vicar, but he “always demonstrated himself very obstinate and pertinacious in his errors common to all the Greeks,” so obstinate in fact that there seemed little hope of any fruit there too.<sup>81</sup>

By the end of January 1584, little had changed. While Eliano believed that “almost all the most important and most intelligent” of the Copts had been won over to the Catholic camp, including one important bishop, the patriarch refused to comply. Eliano felt that the patriarch’s vicar, who was most intractable in his views, had a hold over the patriarch that prevented him from supporting union. Eliano also believed that John was old and ignorant, rendering him unable to make a fair assessment of the synodal debates. Eliano was troubled that despite all the effort he and Sasso had put forth in demonstrating the theological similarities, little had come of

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<sup>80</sup> ASV *Fondo Borghese, serie III, 124 D*, f. 193v./MPOIV.174-175. “Et quello che è peggio, avendoci promesso ad istanza del signore console, che era presente, di voler fare un sinodo più universale, per poter meglio discorrere circa queste verità et l’altre, hora si lascia intendere chiaramente di non voler innovar altro, si perché sono stati tanti anni in questa fide, che l’hanno insegnata tanti patriarchi, suoi antecessori, quali questa misera nazione adora et canoniza per santi; si perché tanti libri che lor hanno, non l’insegnano altro di quello che loro confessano contro la verità cattolica; come anco per la mala opinione che loro hanno della Chiesa Romana dal tempo santo Concilio Calcedonese in qua, con tenerci tutti per heretici nestoriani; come finalmente con dirci che facendosi questo sinodo provinciale di tutti i vescovi, nessuno sari ache potesse determinare qual parte havesse più ragione. Si che per queste et simili altre cose il patriarcha chiaramente dimostra di non voler trattar et innovare cosa alcuna, da quille c’hanno tenuto i suoi predecessori.”

<sup>81</sup> ASV *Fondo Borghese, serie III, 124 D*, f. 196r./MPOIV.175. “In quanto a Cophti già havemo detto in che stato ci troviamo. In quanto poi a Greci Vostra Signoria Illustrissima ha da sapere che il patriarcha loro è in Costantinopoli. Ha lasciato sì ben qui un suo vicario col quale, sendosi tratatto più volte, si è dimostrato sempre ostinatissimo et pertinace negli errori comuni a tutti i Greci. Tal che, se ben venisse il patriarcha, dovendo esser costui mezzano (poiché il patriarcha non sa altra lingua che greca) Vostra Signoria Illustrissima può considerare che speranza ci può esser di frutto.”

the synod and it was apparent no fruit ever would.<sup>82</sup> This seemed to be even more troubling for Sasso. Sasso was demoralized by the Copts' insipid rejection of the Jesuits' efforts. Sasso felt that he had exhausted his entire arsenal and that there was little left to do aside from depart for Italy. But Eliano, the more experienced and sagacious of the pair, knew that "there are twelve hours of daylight," believing that despite Sasso's melancholy, the pair should not give up just yet. For some had converted; and if they continued their work, there was still hope that John and his vicar and the rest of the Copts would eventually come around. If, however, little had changed, they would return to Italy with Coptic youths whom the patriarch promised would be sent to the Collegio Romano.<sup>83</sup>

It was at this point that Mariani's influence among the Copts again came into play, the point where European bureaucracy and its influence abroad was a positive factor in the Jesuits' missions. Just as the Jesuits seemed to be losing hope, one of Mariani's closest Coptic allies, a bishop named Dioscorus, called upon other bishops to meet; the result of this five-hour meeting in Mariani's home was the third session of the synod, which convened on 1 February. In this session the Jesuits and Copts reached a theological accord. Eliano and Sasso deemed the Copts'

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<sup>82</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 223r./MPOIV.188-189. "Et fin hora si ha fatto assai, sperando che sel nimico d'ogni ben non ci impedisse de far meglio, perché sono guadagnati alla nostra devotione et alla verità catholica quasi tutti li più principali et più intelligenti della natione, fra quali è anco un vescovo. I quali s'adoprano gagliardemente a suader questa verità catholica alli altri; poi ché il patriarcha per la sua vechaia et ignorantia è tanto insipido, che non si può far niente con lui, et quello che è peggio, è guidato da un suo frate che è vicario suo molto ostinato, che ci da che fare non ostante che li havemo mostratt tutti i luochi cavati da propri libri loro de santi antichi che convengono con noi che sono più di 300 testimonij, quali havemo redutti insieme et disseminati tra di loro, acciò le legano et le considerano in tal modo che se a queste tante verità resisteranno, sarà chiaro che la cosa si ridurà a niente, quanto quello che tocca al patriarcha, se ben questi più intelligenti guadagnati faranno alla giornata qualche buon frutto nella propria natione."

<sup>83</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 223r./MPOIV.189. "Queste difficoltà che troviamo nel patriarcha et alcuni suoi men intelligenti et più ostinati, ha mosso il Padre Sasso de voler finirla et non farci altro, et spedirsi de qua per andar in Italia, parendoli di haver usato tutti li mezzi. Ma io che so per longa pratica con questi orientali, conoscendo che duodecim sunt horae diei, et si come sono guadagnati alquanti, hora col mezzo loro si potriano guadagnar delli altri, et forse anche il patriarcha medesimo, intendo di non volermi partir a patto nessuno fin che habbiamo usato più diligentia et conversato con loro più strettamente et aspettar fin al settembre, quando se non faremo più frutto di ritornar in compagnia delli duoi che il patriarcha ha detto volerci dar, acciò vadino a Roma per informarsi personalmente, et anco in compagnia di alcuni putti per il Collegio."

formula for holding “two natures united in one person” to be orthodox and Catholic. While the Copts still feared that professing two persons in Christ would render them Nestorian heretics, their acknowledgement that Christ is “true God and true man” was close enough.<sup>84</sup> The next step of course was getting this in writing. To do so, Eliano and Sasso chose their words very meticulously when crafting the synodal proclamation. The Copts and Catholics present confessed that they believed “the eternal Lord is united with the human body, in perfection, from the Virgin Mary” possessing all human characteristics except sin; however, they confessed neither “two natures” nor “one nature,” lest the differences between nature and person become confusing and a point of contention. Instead, they stressed over and over their belief in “a human God, one Lord, one Christ, God and man together; his humanity was never separated from his divinity, not even for a moment.” Furthermore, Jesus possessed “divine and human operations, willfully, without any separation from the moment of conception until the end of time.” The Copts, no matter how persistent they may have been when it came to the minutiae of “person” versus “nature,” could not deny this Christological formula, as doing so would have denied the centrality of the hypostatic union, and would have been seen as Nestorian heresy to them. It was then written in Arabic, and Eliano and Sasso joyously applauded the bishops’ acceptance of the

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<sup>84</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 225r./MPOIV.193-194. “Pur venendo questi giorni un vescovo di gran stima et conto presso loro, et vedendo noi che ritrovandosi nel Cairo tre altri vescovi, era oportuno tempo di dar un altro buon assalto, facessimo tanto col clarissimo console che interponendo l’opera sua presto il patriarca et suoi, s’inclinassero a far un altro sinodo. Et così l’atro ieri che fu il primo di febraro, in casa del detto Signor Console congregandosi il patriarca et detti vescovi et suo vicario generale con molti altri principali, dopo di esser discusso più di cinque hore, si determinò, mediante la divina gratia, quello che con tante fatiche s’è procurato sin qua, cioè che non dicessero: una natura in Christo, ma che, confessando il Salvator esser vero Dio et vero humano, tenessero due nature unite in una persona. Et se ben per molto che ci operassimo, non potessimo far sì, che con voce dicessero: due nature in Christo, temendo (come lor dicevano) di non incorrere nella heresia di Nestorio che confessa anco due persone, pur che secundum rem confessavano detta verità. Poi che dicendo che in Christo non era una natura, ma se ben che era vero Dio et vero homo, restassimo contenti per all’hora, sperando pian pian con la grazia di Dio, che si come sono ridotti a confessar la verità secundum rem et abhorir la falsità di una natura, così anco in parole venessero a confessar le due nature.”

synodal proclamation, something that seemed to signal, at least for Eliano and Sasso, a move in the right direction.<sup>85</sup>

There was, of course, one signatory missing from the synod: Patriarch John XIV. He remained adamant about rejecting the formula Eliano and Sasso had proposed. The pair feared that, despite the strides they had made with many Copts, as long as the patriarch was alive, the mission would never go much further, for without his signature the synod meant nothing.<sup>86</sup> Also agitating the pair was John's decision to spend Easter in the desert with his vicar. Sasso believed that it would be best to write a letter to the patriarch explaining that his flight was unjustified and that he should accept the synod as so many other Copts already had. Additionally, Sasso believed that the patriarch should be reminded that what they proposed were doctrinal truths established by Chalcedon as well as the councils held at Nicaea (325), Constantinople (360), and Ephesus (431); while aggressive, Eliano and Sasso hoped that the pressures of bishops as well as the history of the faith would force the patriarch to reconsider.<sup>87</sup> April, however, proved to be an idle month. John's intractability and flight meant that the mission was on hold, and they believed that their presence was better employed elsewhere. For this reason, the pair planned to depart from

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<sup>85</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 225r./MPOIV.194. "Confessiamo et diciamo che la persona del Signor eterno è unita con corpo humano, perfetto, preso da Maria Virgine, con anima rationale, intellettuale, natura humana perfetta eccetto il peccato. Qual natura in unione perfetta è unita nella sua persona. Non diciamo: due nature, temendo che non s'intenda due persone, et non si toglia li sacramento dell'unione. Non diciamo: una natura, per non confunder o misciar. Ma confessiamo et affermiamo et crediamo et professiamo, che esso è un Dio humanato, un Signore, un Christo, Dio et huomo insieme, et non si separò la humanità dalla divinità pur un momento. Et Lui ha operato le operationi divine et humane, voluntariamente, senza separatione alcuna dal tempo dell'istante del concettione sin al fine de secoli. Questa è la determinatione che in arabico ci fu da lor proposta et con summo consenso da tutti ricevuta."

<sup>86</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 229r./MPOIV.203. "...mentre viverà questo patriarca et con esso tal suo vicario, non si potrà far altro di quello che si è fatto, che è d'haver guadagnato alcuni di particolari, l'aggiuto de quali con la gratia del Signore più servirà quando saranno privi d'un tal impedimento et ostacolo come è quello del patriarca et suo vicario."

<sup>87</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 106*, f. 231r./MPOIV.212. "Io vedendo questa sì dura resolutione propose insieme col Padre Baptista in nome de tutti due scriver questa lettera al patriarca et sua nazione; qual Vostra Paternità potrà leggere, et se li par, mandarla poi all'Ilustrissimo Cardinale Santa Severina. Dove li diciamo brevemente che la caussa per laquale se sono separati dalla Santa Obedienza Apostolica è stata ingiustissima et senza ragione, poichè quello che il Santissimo Concilio Calcedonese determinò delle due nature in Christo Signore Nostro è cosa verissima, cavata dala Santa Scrittura, et determinate anche da i Santi Concilij Niceo, Constantinopolitano primo, Ephesino primo, quali loro ricevono."



Egypt as soon as possible, “in order that our efforts be employed fruitfully.”<sup>88</sup> Eliano planned to remain in Cairo for most of the summer while Sasso took a pilgrimage to Jerusalem with a few Coptic companions.<sup>89</sup> Eliano was frustrated that the first ship for Italy was not until the middle of September; it seemed it would be a very long five months. But Eliano could not have foreseen how difficult those five months would be, and how their stay in Egypt would eventually end in political scandal. For, on 24 June 1584, Christopharo Vento arrived, charged to replace Paolo Mariani as French Consul in Cairo. Now, dealing with Copts was the least of their problems. Over the next several months, the Jesuits slowly watched as their personal safety became their primary concern.

### **Vento, Mariani, and the fight for the French consulate**

In the months leading up to Vento’s arrival, all progress that had been made at the synod seemed to be lost. By April, Eliano and the John were no longer in communication. John, for his part, remained firm in his anti-Catholic views and refused to meet in order to discuss anything further. This saddened Eliano, as John had shown such great amenability at first, and had told Mariani on several occasions that he looked forward to working with the Jesuits. But instead, Eliano felt betrayed both for himself and for the Copts, as John spent much time in the monasteries rather than with the community, something Eliano perceived as an abandonment of John’s apostolic duties. Eliano believed that there was little left to do but leave; no matter how

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<sup>88</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 263r./MPOIV.225. “Vedendo noi adonche tal lor mala dispositione così fomentata da questo mal huomo, vicario del patriarca, fatto prima buona oratione et detto alquante Messe, ci siamo determinato di ritornar in Italia con prima occasione di vassello per la via di Cicilia o di Venetia, acciò queste nostre fatiche siano impiegate con più frutto.”

<sup>89</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 II, f. 180r./MPOIV.235. “Et con questa determinatione si è partito di qua il Padre Sasso col suo compagno per Jerusalem, acciò al suo ritorno, ci poniamo in viaggio con la prima occasione, che par non potrà esser prima di mezo settembre.”

hard they tried, John would always reject their efforts.<sup>90</sup> Rightly or wrongly, Eliano believed that it truly was John who stood in the way of union, and that so long as John was the patriarch, union would never be achieved. Eventually, the elderly John would die. But that day would not come until 5 September 1584, and then electing his successor could drag on for months. While John was old and frail, the Jesuits simply could not wait for their theological nemesis to pass away and risk the election of an even more unshakable successor.

And just when it seemed the mission could not encounter any more setbacks, everything changed with Vento's arrival. Acquaviva and Santa Severina actively sought to prevent the political struggle that would soon involve the Jesuits. Acquaviva foresaw the situation, as he wrote to Eliano in April that he had made Gregory aware of the accusations against Mariani and that they had performed their due diligence in ensuring Mariani was not replaced with Vento.<sup>91</sup> Santa Severina also did his part to ensure that Mariani was not recalled. His efforts with Gregory seem to have paid off, as the pontiff wrote letters both to Henry III and to his papal nuncio in France, Girolamo Ragazzoni, in support of Mariani.<sup>92</sup> However, these letters were too late; by the time they arrived in France, Vento, long departed from France, had already left

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<sup>90</sup> ARSI, *Gall* 106, f. 239r./MPOIV.240. "Già di commune innanzi che il Padre Sasso andasse a Jerusalem, li havemo scritto largamente del infelice stato che hora si ritrova questo patriarca, et come per la sua ignorantia acompagnata con la malatia del suo vicario generale, dopo haver dato a me et al console tanta buona speranza di far frutto, si è ritirato al deserto in certi monasterij, et ha abbandonato la cura che deveria tener sopra la sua nazione che va sempre de mal in peggio, fuor de alquanti che già guadagnati che si affaticano di guadagnar altri. Onde con lasciarli ben incaminati per quello che toccava a noi già havemo determinato di voler ritornar con prima occasione, che non sarà prima de settembre, con la gratia di Dio."

<sup>91</sup> ARSI, *Ven.* 3, f. 1v./MPOIV.231. "Et quanto al negotio de Signor Paolo Mariani, l'Illustrissimo di Santa Severina come molte ben chiarito quanto importi che questo gentilhuomo sia confermato nel carico che tiene così, fece subito l'uffizio che le Reverenze Vostre ricercavano, et non ha se non aiutato il testimonio loro de i meriti della persona. Solamente dubitiamo se per esserci giunto l'aviso molto tardi, la diligenza che si è fatta, sarà a tempo. Noi certo desideriamo et preghiamo il Signore che la casa habbia ogni buon successo."

<sup>92</sup> Ragazzoni, a Venetian, was coadjutor bishop of Famagusta in Venetian Cyprus from 1561 to 1572. He was apostolic administrator in Cismus, Crete, until his election as Bishop of Novara in 1576. He then moved on to serve as bishop in Bergamo in 1577. He remained in that post until his death, while also serving as papal nuncio to France from 1583 to 1586. For more on his life, cf. Tarcisio Bottani, *Girolamo Ragazzoni: Vescovo di Bergamo* (Bergamo: Corponove, 1994). ARSI, *Gall* 98 I, f. 187v./MPOIV.253. "Sua Santità ne fè scrivere al Re Christianissimo da suo Abasciatore qui in buona forma, et ne scrisse anche' ella stessa al suo Nuntio in Francia, che in suo nome ne havesse parlato a Sua Maestà."

Constantinople for Egypt with royal orders to replace Mariani.<sup>93</sup> Acquaviva and Santa Severina had tried, but failed, to prevent the bureaucratic maneuvering of the French monarchy from undermining the mission, but it was far too efficient for them to keep up. Going forward, the Jesuits became casualties in someone else's war.

And so that is how it was on 26 June, when Vento made his presence in Cairo known. Vento sent a messenger to Mariani's residence deposing Mariani as consul. But Mariani denied this, saying the message was false and had not come from Vento. He then refused to give Vento's associate an audience, swiftly sending him off. When the messenger returned to Vento, he explained what had happened. He also told his superior that the Jesuits did not have a private residence but were in fact living in the home of Mariani and had their church there. Vento, enraged by this, accused the Jesuits of being Mariani's yes-men, loyal only to him. He then ordered the fathers to accept him as the new French consul and to deny Mariani's legitimacy immediately. Eliano protested, as he felt that the help that Mariani had given them and his dedication to the consulate rendered him more than fit to keep his post.<sup>94</sup> Despite their protests, their actions demonstrated to Vento that their loyalties lay with Mariani, not to the mission, not to the Church, and certainly not to France; they became marked men.

Despite knowing the mission was in peril (though it is arguable he did not know to what degree), Gregory still wanted Eliano and Sasso to carry forward. The pope was adamant that they stay and wait things out. One issue that stood out for Gregory was John's age and the possibility

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<sup>93</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 187v-188r./MPOIV.253. "Ma dubito che non si sarà stato a tempo, perché si sono ricevute lettere da' Padri della Compagnia che sono in Constantinopoli, nelle quali scrivono che il nuovo console, destinato dalla detta Maestà Christianissima per l'Egitto, era arrivato all Porta di quel signore et espedito.

<sup>94</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 238r./MPOIV.250-251. "Noi sottoscritti facciamo fede qualmente alli 26 di Giugno prossimo passato, venne alla chiesa et casa delli Reverendi Padri del Jesù qui nel Cairo, uno che diceva essere Cancelliero del signor Christofaro Vento, accompagnato con alcuni altri, con certe scritture, che diceva protestar al Signor Mariani in material del consolato di Francia. Et parendo a esso signor Mariani che detto huomo non fussi legittimo Cancelliero, non volse ascoltar detti protesti, se non mostrava chi lui era....All' hora dello Cancelliero, parendoli che li Reverendi Padri di Jesù che abitano in uno appartamento della casa di detto signor Mariani dove hanno la lor chiesa, fossero huomini di detto signor Mariani..."

that a new patriarch would soon be elected, one who would be more amenable to union or at least willing to listen to the Jesuits' overtures.<sup>95</sup> There was another issue: the doctrinal accord struck at the synod in February. Santa Severina and Acquaviva, along with a slew of theologians, felt that it was not adequate enough and did nothing to prove that the Copts accepted the Chalcedonian formula. Furthermore, they interpreted it as simply reiterations of the Copts' previous formulae, one that did not deny their monophysitism.<sup>96</sup> Santa Severina also refused to let go of the mission. He believed that the election of a new patriarch would give the mission its much-needed Coptic ally, and it would be through Mariani that they would be able to ensure a Copt amenable to them was elected. But there were two problems. First, any types of political machinations like these could put the credibility of the papacy, and the Catholic Church's hope for unity, in grave jeopardy. The other, of course, was Vento and Mariani. It was clear that Vento was not going to support the Jesuits because of their ties to Mariani. And equally vague was the future of Mariani in Egypt.<sup>97</sup> If Vento's first week in Cairo was any indication of anything, matters would escalate quickly between Vento and Mariani. So, the rejection of the synod and the issues with the French left the Jesuits with nothing. They would have to start over completely, or so it seemed, but this time in a politically hostile climate without the same level of local support they had enjoyed.

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<sup>95</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 195v./MPOIV.258. "et perché ancora potrà succedere occasione migliore di elettione di nuovo patriarca (essendo questo tanto vecchio come scrivono) o simile, con la quale potranno far notabile servitio al Signore et a quella natione, et intanto mantener viva questa pratica, et confermare quei che sono ridotti nella verità della santa cattolica fede."

<sup>96</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 196v./MPOIV.260. "Poiché il modo et le parole che in quella usano, ripugnano espressamente alla difinitione del Sacrosanto Concilio Calcedonese. Et così è parso similmente al Padre Toledo, il quale essendoseli, per ordine della Santità Sua, comunicata per considerarla et haverne il suo parere, mi ha riferito il medesimo, et gli hò fatto anco porre in scritto il suo parere, del quale mando con questa copia alle Reverentie Vostre, per potersene elle valere per l'avvenire. Della medesima opinione sono stati il Padre Generale et altri padri theologi della Compagnia a' quali Sua Paternità l'ha fatta anco considerare, i quali trovano essere questa confessione simile all'altre fatte da' loro predecessori, heretici Dioscoriani et Eutychiani; et credo che Sua Paternità ne manderà copia alle Reverentie Vostre."

<sup>97</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 198r./MPOIV.261-262.

By August, matters seemed to be growing worse for Eliano. Despite his efforts to reengage the Copts in the debates, possibly resulting in the re-convocation of the synod in an effort to correct the proclamation rejected in Rome, the Copts completely ignored Eliano. First, John remained cold. And the patriarch seemed to renege on his promise to send Copts to Rome. All along, John had promised to do at least this, so this about-face perturbed Eliano. The next problem was that John had retired to the monastery of Saint Macarius accompanied by an associate of Ignatius Na'matallah, the former Jacobite Patriarch who was in Rome at the time. Because Eliano and others in Rome did not seem to trust the Syrian prelate, or his allies, Eliano feared that the former Jacobite patriarch would seek to undermine the already fragile mission. By now Eliano feared that Vento would try to destroy the mission from the outside; Ignatius Na'matallah's interference would destroy it from within.<sup>98</sup> It also appeared that several letters sent to Rome had been intercepted. Eliano believed that included in this were letters from John to Gregory. John was offended that his letters went without reply, as he assumed Gregory was simply ignoring him; Gregory just never received them. But by the time Eliano figured this out, it was too late, and the rift between John and Gregory was irreparable.<sup>99</sup> Sasso likewise was done with the mission for all practical purposes. Sasso stopped writing to Rome, feeling that it was so close to their departure and the mission was in such a poor state that there was nothing to report.

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<sup>98</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 216r./MPOIV.281. "Questo al nostro parer per quanto havemo potuto conoscer fin adesso, ha fatto alienar il patriarca et li suoi da noi. Et dubitiamo sarà causa che non mandi con noi quelli che pensavamo anzi quel gran nostro amico et principale della natione, par, se sia alquanto sfreddato et un poco ritirato, et ha posto in dubbio, se vera con noi o non, maxime dicendo costoro che sono qui anco per menar seco al lor partir huomini che mandarà il patriarca a Sua Santità. Finalmente, par che come hanno conceputo et creduto che il Vostra Signoria Illustrissima sia fatto "manzul," al modo che essi credono et questi selli hanno detto che anche de noi faccino poca stima. Ma havemo potuto abocarci con quel altro Jacobita, che havemo inteso che è venuto dal Patriarca Nama, già più de 5 mesi, se ben havemo inteso che, dopo essersi trovato col patriarca sene andato al monastero di San Macario."

<sup>99</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 216r; 219r./MPOIV.280; 281-282. "Et la causa di esser stato battalato è stato per che ha tenuto nascosto le lettere di questo Patriarca de Cofiti da 8 mesi, senza presentarli a Sua Santità...Le lettere che ci scrivi Nostro Padre che havea dati a Joanne Maria Abessino non celi ha rese altrimenti, decendo che non havea lettere. Et così non havemo havuto nissuna lettera da Vostra Signoria Illustrissima quantunque Nostro Padre ci fa mentione nella sua, che più a pieno saremo informati del tutto dalle lettere che ci scrive Vostra Signoria Illustrissima. Credo che ci sono state intercette. Pacientia."

While Eliano seemed to understand Sasso's disheartened idleness, at least in part, he explained to Santa Severina that he would continue to work on the mission, regardless of its success or failure, as it was pleasing to God.<sup>100</sup>

But Eliano became steadily more worried about Christopharo Vento's presence in Cairo. It was still unclear what Vento was going to do to the Jesuits, considering it was quite clear he was not fond of their presence. Eliano received word from Giulio Mancinelli, a Jesuit working with slaves in Constantinople, that Vento had begun writing letters to Gregory, Henry III, Acquaviva, and others claiming that Eliano and Sasso were agents of Mariani and they were attempting to prevent Vento from taking his post without issue. The fact that rumors of Vento's machinations were known as far away as Constantinople meant that Vento was possibly exhausting all his resources to contravene the Jesuits' efforts. While Eliano was grateful that he had two important allies in the Venetian consuls to Egypt, Domenico Dolphin and Giorgio Emo, as well as Mariani, Eliano was unsure if this would be enough to keep him and Sasso safe until their departure in a few short weeks.<sup>101</sup>

For his part, Mariani lamented that he had failed the Jesuits. While in some sense there was nothing he could do (if Henry wanted to recall him, he could), Mariani felt that he had not done enough to safeguard the Jesuits from Vento. It is unclear what more Mariani could have

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<sup>100</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 219r./MPOIV.282. "Il Padre Sasso, per che non molto fa che ha scritto di compagnia, et sendo vicino alla nostra partenza, non si è curato di scriver di novo, et così io solo fo questo, sapendo che se ben questo havemo di esser presenti piacendo al Signore, tuttavia è ben che sia del tutto quanto prima avvisata.

<sup>101</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 219r./MPOIV.284-285. "Questo è quello che passi con ogni verità, et fu alla presentia de molti quali, bisognando, addurei per testimonio. Hora il Signor Christofaro Vento, che è il principal che pretende di disturbar il sudetto Mariani, parendole di esser da me offeso per questo fatto, havea menaciato di voler far et dir, adducendo che facevamo poco conto dele lettere di Sua Maestà et che non volevamo far questo protesto secondo che da noi era ricercato, et che havemo buttato in terra detti protesti. Anzi dice (ma è falso) havendo buttato li piedi sopra dette lettere, et molte altre cose, et questo rumor e andato fin a Constantinopoli, da donde ne sono avisato dal P. Julio Mancinelli, dolendosi che noi siamo partiali, et che non facciamo stima dela Maestà de Franza, qual esso Christofaro Vento spende in ogni su actione, dicendo che Sua Maestà li ha mandato, etc.. et havemo anco presentito da suoi (il che non sappiamo di certo), che vuol protestar contra di me questo fatto, et querelarmi presso Santa Santità et Sua Maestà Christiana, a Vostra Reverenda Paternità, al che seli ha detto, che se ciò facesse, incorreria nella Bolla Cena Domini volendo metter mano a protestar dove non può. Non so quello farà."

done. Moreover, the combination of Vento essentially targeting the Jesuits shortly after his arrival and the Copts' continual intransigence despite their close ties to Mariani were, for the outgoing consul, the root cause of the mission's failure. Also, the death of John on 5 September meant the community had larger concerns: the election of a new patriarch took precedence over meeting with men the previous patriarch perceived as interlopers. While it appeared that the Jesuits would not remain in Egypt for much longer, Mariani promised that so long as he was in Egypt, he would keep Acquaviva and the Society informed about the Copts and their view of Rome, perhaps leaving open the possibility of the missionaries' return in the future.<sup>102</sup> Likewise, he promised to protect the Jesuits from Vento until their departure, as best he could.

However, as he no longer had the authority of the French king in his back pocket, there was little Mariani could do if Vento did decide to attack the Jesuits. And, indeed, when he did, Mariani was completely helpless to stop it. And this came just a day after Mariani lamented his decreasing ability to protect the Jesuits. It was 21 September, and Eliano, Sasso, and Francesco Buono<sup>103</sup> were in the residence of Mariani preparing for the Mass of the Feast of Saint Matthew. After being seized by the guards of the pasha, who had them arrested under suspicion of inciting a Coptic rebellion against the Ottomans, the Jesuits were carried off to prison. At a loss for why they were arrested, the prisoners put their faith in God, hoping that prayer would liberate them from their troubles. After a night in the military prison, where they were ready to embrace death,

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<sup>102</sup> ARSI, *Gall 106*, f. 242rv./MPOIV.286-287. "a fine ch  La sia sicura non ci  non esser proceduto per mancamento di buona volont , ma per non haver io potuto pi  di quello ho fatto, et per non havermi loro voluto comandare pi  avanti, poi che sempre mi haveriano trovato promptissimo in qualsivoglia cosa... Et oltre di ci  questa natione cophta resta molto travagliata per li gran disturbi che da alcuni mesi, in qua sono statti datti alli principali di questa natione per causa della patriarcha, il quale ultimamente vene a morte, et per questa caggione dovendossi ritardar molti mesi prima che si facci elletione del novo... Et si come io ho anco largamente scritto all'Illustrissimo Santa Severina, che serano commune a Vostra Signoria Reverendissima, la qual sar  da me avisata giornalmente di quello succeder  fino ala elletione di novo patriarcha, et fra tanto di l  col Illustrissimo Santa Severina, le potranno pensare quello che si potr  operare nel avenir circa questa natione, restando io benissimo informato da li detti Reverendi Padri, et conservando con questi principali di qua stretta amititia."

<sup>103</sup> Buono, a Jesuit from Milan, played such a minor role in this mission that he is almost never mentioned in the reports. He is only referred to here as he was also arrested with Eliano and Sasso. Mario Amato at this point was in Alexandria and therefore was not implicated in the affair.

the three were taken before the pasha, who thoroughly interrogated them. The Jesuits tried to explain to the pasha that they were there to serve the needs of Christians and to visit holy sites, and that they had been trying to depart for months. After hearing why they were arrested, they pained to explain that they were not agents of dissent bent on stirring the Copts against Ottoman authority. The pasha, however, did not seem to care. He ordered the Jesuits be thrown into the Arcana, the prison of his palace in Cairo. Known for its harsh conditions, this prison was, or so it seemed, a virtual death sentence. Cramped into a small cell, the trio had little light and just a small earthen bed. Sasso explained that they were given the minimum needed to survive, and that they prepared themselves for the worst. He then cited 1 Peter 2:21: “For unto this are you called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow his steps.” Sasso closed the letter explaining, “I will say nothing else, only recommending ourselves to the blessed sacrifices and prayers of Your Paternity and all the most dear fathers and brothers of Rome, so that they may impart to us from the Lord true and firm patience.”<sup>104</sup> The fathers prepared themselves to embrace death.

After a week in the Arcana, Eliano sent a letter to the Jesuit provincial of Rome, Giovanni Nicola de Notariis. Eliano explained to his superior that he felt death was imminent, as every day brought a new danger. But what further troubled Eliano was that rumors about their arrest had begun to circulate amongst the Copts, including the charges of inciting revolt. Fearing they would be implicated in the conspiracy, most of the community had distanced itself from Mariani and had even gone into hiding lest they also be seized and cast to the same fate as the

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<sup>104</sup> ARSI, *Gall* 106, f. 244r-245v./MPOIV.289-290. “sed omnia sustinemus alcriter propter eum qui dat nobis toleratiam, sicut reliquit exemplum ut sequeremur vestigia eius. Non dirò altro, solo raccomandoci alli Santi Sacrificij et orationi di Vostra Paternità et de tutti li padre et fratelli charissimi di Roma, acciò ci impetrino dal Signore vera et solida pazienza.” The actual Vulgate Latin of 1 Peter 2:21 reads “in hoc enim vocati estis quia et Christus passus est pro vobis vobis relinquens exemplum ut sequamini vestigia eius” rather than what is present in the letter; while worded slightly differently, the spirit is the same and thus I have translated and placed the actual Vulgate into the text.



Jesuits. To make matters worse, the pasha viewed Coptic union with Rome and rebellion against the Porte as one and the same. Because of this, the Copts now refused to send their youths to Rome, lest there be retribution for cooperating with Gregory's supposed plans for sedition.<sup>105</sup> It also appeared that the pasha believed the Jesuits' true desire was to turn the Ottoman Empire into a Christian one, which surely would have been sealed with a death sentence. Eliano feared that the only way to avoid death at this point would be an absurdly high ransom, which Mariani and his associates quickly attempted to raise before it was too late.<sup>106</sup> Rightly so, Eliano and his companions were terrified. The three tried to maintain some sense of solidarity, but it was difficult to do in the face of impending death. The only thing they could do at that juncture was pray for the wisdom and strength they would need to carry them to martyrdom.<sup>107</sup> The mystery surrounding who instigated the arrest left Eliano and his companions with little choice but to reflect on their predicament and focus on God's plan for them, especially as martyrdom became a real possibility.

At first it seemed like another instance of Ottoman authorities showing their muscle without justification; but eventually some clarity concerning the arrest came about. In his declaration of his debt paid to a certain Alvise Rosetti for the liberation of the Jesuits, Mariani

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<sup>105</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 223r./MPOIV.292. "è pui arivata la desiderata hora, che molto innanzi è stata da me aspettata et forse anche desiderata, in trovarci nelli forti del Bassà, con pericolo d'ogni hora aspettar la morte, et tal morte che dar si suol a rebelli del regno come questi ci tengono... Ha causato questa nostra prigionia tanto male che certo è tanto che è da piangere, imperoché non solo noi havemo di riportar frutto di questa missione, per il sgomento che hanno pigliato li Cofiti che sono ritirati et né solo vogliono parlar né sentir parlar delle cose dela nostra fede, ma li maggiori dela nazione si sono ritirati et nascosti, temendo che anche lor siano retinuti et tormentati et forze amazati con confiscar tutti il lor beni."

<sup>106</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 223rv./MPOIV.292. "Da donde chiaramente il bassà et questi signori Turchi hanno conosciuto, che siamo mandati dal papa, et per questo la fanno molto grande con dir che il papa ci ha mandato per sollevar i popoli christiani et farli unir con li Franchi, et far che questo paese del Turco sia de Christiani. Del che ne segue o la morte horribile nostra, ovvero, come molti persuadono, che tutto questo si fa per mangiar denari, et ha havuto a dir il bassà, che è il vice re del paese, che ci è uno fra di noi che il papa lo riscuotaria con venti mila cecchini, che sono da 30 mila scudi loro."

<sup>107</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 224r./MPOIV.293. "È certo che per lucida intervalla Vostra Reverentia potrà vi credere che l'anima si ritrova pronta a tutto quello che ci potrà avenir de male, ma come la carne è inferma, fa il suo officio con star con qualche spavento et paura; non cessamo ogni hora di raccomandarci al Signore con orationi, et prepararci a tutto quello Iddio sarà servito, sia fatto di noi."

signed the document “consul-elect.” In this instance, Mariani was referring to his position as English consul-elect to Cairo, a post he had accepted when it was clear that the pasha would declare Mariani a private citizen, as Vento was now the French consul. It appears that as long as Vento had the pasha’s approval, Mariani had no choice but to accept his fate and step down as French consul. But the Jesuits and Mariani still did not know that the arrest was the work of Vento and his allies. While they neither liked nor trusted Vento because of his efforts to undermine the mission, going so far as to have them thrown in prison seemed too radical, even for Vento.<sup>108</sup> This explains why after their release had been secured via the hefty ransom, the Jesuits, Mariani, and their allies made a joint declaration against only the pasha for his actions. They declared that the Jesuits were only there to serve the wishes of Gregory, who sent them to fulfill the spiritual needs of the Copts. The second, derivative grievance was that the pasha’s unjustified actions directly put the Copts’ souls in jeopardy, as they now feared working with the Jesuits lest the pasha also pursue them for sedition and contravention of Ottoman authority.<sup>109</sup> But throughout the whole declaration, Vento’s name was not mentioned once. So, since matters seemed to be resolved, the Jesuits clung to the belief that they could eventually see some success on the mission. They decided that it would be best to send Sasso back to Rome to inform the curia about their imprisonment and further details pertaining to the mission. Eliano, because of his knowledge of Arabic, was charged with remaining in Egypt in order to regain the Copts’

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<sup>108</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 226r./MPOIV.294. For more on the transition of the French consulate from Mariani to Vento, as well as Mariani’s assumption as English consul, see Prosper Alpini, *Histoire Naturelle De l’Egypte, 1581-1584*, volume I (Cairo: Institut français d’archéologie orientale du Caire, 1979), 110.

<sup>109</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 228r./MPOIV.296. “Sebene si è veduto che Reverendi Padrio erano risolutissimi di obedire in ogni modo al volere di Nostro Signore quantunque ci andasse la vita, nondimeno stante le cose sucesse, si della avania predetta come di vacantia del patriarcato di qui, et ancho perché cossi di subito li animi delli Cofiti spaventati per si fatta novità, non si dimostreranno forse tanto pronti, scoprendosi anco che l’avania fatta dipende da Christiano francho, il quale vedendo esser stato caggione di haver fatto spendere una si fatta soma di danaro senza esserli reuscito il disegno, si potria andare immaginando nove insidie per effettuare il mal animo suo.”

confidence as well as observe the election of the new patriarch, which had yet to take place.<sup>110</sup> With that decided, Sasso prepared for his departure from Cairo, which took place on 12 November.

By late October Eliano was slowly beginning to see exactly what had happened. He learned that Vento recognized Mariani's deep roots in Egypt, and simply asking him to relinquish his post would not happen. He therefore concocted a plan to implicate the outgoing consul and his allies in a fake conspiracy against the Ottoman authorities. Eliano also learned that Vento was not alone, as he had fellow Frenchmen and Ottomans who sought to damn the legacy of Mariani and falsely accuse him of undermining French and Ottoman authority. Apparently, Vento claimed that he was told that Mariani and the Jesuits were plotting a revolt of nearly sixty thousand Copts and Franks.<sup>111</sup> In response, Vento immediately went to the pasha to explain to him that this conspiracy existed and that Mariani was housing the ringleaders, who were of course Eliano and Sasso.<sup>112</sup> Eliano learned that the man Vento claimed had given him this information was a Portuguese Jew spending his days in a Turkish militia. It was believed that this man had been persecuted under Pope Paul IV, and thus sought revenge against the

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<sup>110</sup> ARSI, *Gall* 98 I, f. 228rv./MPOIV.296. "È parso a tutti li sottoscritti congregati a questo effetto che serrà molto più servitio del Signore (se bene detti Reverendi Padri hanno espresso ordine di non partirsi l'uno da l'altro) lassare che uno delli detti Reverendi Padri con il compagno resti qui, per obedire al volere di Sua Santità, et continuare, mentre stij Sede vacante, a guadagnare di questi della natione, et far pratiche con loro, et conservar etiam quelli che si sonno acquistati, et favorire ancho la creatione del novo patriarca, che sij sogetto, dal quale si possi sperare qualche bon frutto mantenando viva questa missione... Et l'oppinione delli sottsignati è che il Padre che ha da restar qui sij il Reverendo Padre Battista Eliano, per havere la lingua araba, con la quale potrà continuare a far frutto con questi della natione cofta, e che il Padre Francesco Sasso sii quelli che habbi andare in persona per il fine di sopra dechiarato."

<sup>111</sup> ARSI, *Gall*. 106, f. 246v./MPOIV.300. "Patri Reverendi, vi fo saper, qualmente hoggi dopo di esser arivato qua, certi Judei mi hanno riferito che voi state qui per solevare questi popoli cofti contra il Turcho, et per mezo vostro si dovevano metter insieme 60 mille Christiani, per poi unirsi con li nostri Christiani franchi, suggragandovi a ciò il Signor Mariani nella casa del quale demorate, etc."

<sup>112</sup> ARSI, *Gall*. 106, f. 246v./MPOIV.301. "Havemo ancora inteso che detto Signor Vento più volte ha fatto nova instantia appresso il Signor Bassà du quest solevatione, ma mai ne fu fatto caso alcuno."

Jesuits and against Mariani for supporting their efforts.<sup>113</sup> Eliano did not believe that Vento was simply performing his due diligence in this matter, and believed that he used these accusations as a pretext to coordinate their arrest, which would surely benefit him and shame Mariani as a harbinger of rebels against the state. This is apparent in how it was only after numerous merchants and diplomats showed up at the pasha's palace to petition their release that Vento came to their defense. But Eliano retrospectively viewed this as another tactic of Vento, who was only on their side in order to cover up his intrigues; his actions leading to their arrest clearly demonstrated that he was the real ringleader of the conspiracy.<sup>114</sup>

But they still needed to prove Vento had a role in the affair. Furthermore, the Jesuits and Mariani wanted their names cleared once and for all. Therefore, over the first week of November, Riccardo da Lecce, the commissary of the Guardian of Jerusalem, took depositions to seek out the truth. The first to speak up was Francesco Bongrani, a merchant from Ancona. He claimed that Vento was frustrated and bitter that Mariani refused to acknowledge his authority and that the Jesuits remained so closely allied with his new rival. Bongrani then reported that Vento finally determined to bribe the pasha to arrest the Jesuits and discredit Mariani.<sup>115</sup> Lorenzo Girardi, a Venetian merchant, concurred, explaining that he had overheard Vento tell high ranking Ottoman officials that Mariani should "lose his head like a rebel" for harboring spies

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<sup>113</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 247r./MPOIV.301. "Questa notte si fece longa prattica con li servatori de quelli che ci presero, nella casa delli quali stavamo, et tutti ci affimarono che quella spia era Judeo portoghese, il quale de compagnia de un certo David Mozo, huomo intrinseco de questo Signor Vento, più volte erano venuti dal ciauusso che ci prese, a sollecitar il negotio. Et così quella matina se stravestì in detta casa, imprestandoli detti servitori quelle veste che portava, et di là se partì con tutta la caterva per far il servitio."

<sup>114</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 248r./MPOIV.303-304. "Il Signor Vento che era agittator di questa causa contra il Mariani, pareva ci fosse più tosto contrario che favorevole, se ben con parole voleva inferir il contrario."

<sup>115</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 II, f. 240v./MPOIV.310. "Et più esso Signor Bongrani disse che essendo andato più volte acompagnar esso Signor Paolo dinanzi al Signor Bassà, quando si trattavano le lite con detto Signor Vento, vedendosi esso Signor Vento dover ritornar senza profitto alcuno, sendoli ributtate molte sue dimande dalle ragioni del detto Signor Paolo, finalmente vidde il Signor Vento come vinto metter mano alla sua tasca, et di quella trasse fuori una carta, credo turchesca, in forma de supplica, et l'appresentò in mano de esso Signor Bassà accompagnandola con queste o simil parole: "Io voglio hora chiarir quest'huomo," significando per questo huomo il sudetto Signor Paolo."

against the Turks (these spies would be the Jesuits).<sup>116</sup> Marsilio d'Acquisti, a Florentine, claimed that, after not getting his way, Vento told the pasha that Mariani was planning a rebellion with the Copts and that Mariani promised that sixty thousand Copts would rise up against the Turks as part of an attack led by King Philip II of Spain, Sultan Murad III's most bitter European rival. Marino Cocalino, a Venetian, claimed that he overheard one of Vento's men, a certain Benedetto Armano, ask Mariani if he had heard the good news, referring to the Jesuits' arrest. Bernardo Veluti, a Florentine, overheard Vento say that if Mariani did not remove himself, he would find other means to do so. Paolo Martini da Sorrento witnessed the Turks take the Jesuits from Mariani's house, and he overheard Vento's men discuss how if Mariani did not step down, Vento would also cause trouble for his rival as well. And finally, the Venetian Nicolò Pelegrini rejected the pasha's claims that his orders were from Constantinople, as he was certain it was orchestrated by Vento and the Portuguese Jew David Moze, who lived with and was close to Vento. In sum, the evidence was damning. It was clear to Riccardo da Lecce that Vento was responsible for the imprisonment of Eliano and Sasso.<sup>117</sup>

For his part, Eliano also wrote a long condemnation of Vento. Eliano explained that the merchants, not just Mariani, refused to accept Vento, as he was seen as vain and dishonest, and would only use the position to benefit himself rather than those whose interests he was charged to protect. While the Venetian consul refused to stand up against a French diplomat, many others did, including Christians, Jews, and Moors.<sup>118</sup> He also claimed that Vento knew of their

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<sup>116</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 240v-241r./MPOIV.310. "Et io ho sentito esso Vento nel castello, ove sta il Bassà del Cairo, gridar davanti li primi del Signor Visir, che Paolo Mariani meritava perder la testa come ribello et non darle carico de consule; et medesimamente nel detto castello intesi che li suoi dragomani andavano ragionando che esso Mariani non meritava di esser consule perché havea in casa sua spioni..."

<sup>117</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 241r-243v./MPOIV.311-317.

<sup>118</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 I* f. 245/246v-247r./MPOIV.319. "Non solamente il Mariani ma tutti, tanto Christiani, Judei et Mori, quanto noi medesimi, che fussimo incarcerati, sospettavamo che detta vania l'havesse fatto il Vento per moltissime ragioni che si offerivano, quali furono poi meglio conosciuti dalli esaminati iuridicamente sotto giuramento come apar nel processo che ha Vostra Signoria Illustrissima che io ho visto... Ma perché il console de

imprisonment and did nothing to stop it until others did first, suggesting the consul instigated the rumor that they were there to start a rebellion, and that Vento falsely accused Mariani of choking to death Francesco Coronato, one of Mariani's creditors.<sup>119</sup> It then became known that Vento felt that Mariani should be put to death for treason because he did not obey the orders of the king. But perhaps most shocking for Eliano was the rumor that Vento openly allowed Jews to practice their faith in his home.<sup>120</sup> The sum of his actions demonstrated for Eliano that Vento was not a man of God but rather a traitor to his duties and that it was he, not Mariani, who should be punished for his actions. But what could be done about it? The problem was Vento still had the backing of the pasha and Henry III. So long as that was the case, nothing could truly be accomplished.

The other, perhaps larger, underlying issue, and something that Eliano and his allies seemed to have missed until it was too late, was how the confessional politics of Ottoman Egypt truly worked. And this was something that Vento, much to his credit, seemed to understand quite well. Whereas Eliano, Sasso, Acquaviva, Santa Severina, and even Gregory believed to a great extent that theirs was a civilizing and Christianizing mission with the end goals of saving the souls of the Copts and thus bringing more religious authority to the pope, Vento clearly understood that the pasha saw this quite differently. The pasha saw the effort to unify all Christians under the pope as a political as well as a religious endeavor, and Vento used that to convince the pasha to orchestrate the arrest. That is not to say that the Church was completely ignorant of this. But they were unable to recognize the delicacy of the situation. The appearance of a top-down effort on Rome's part to woo the Christian Orient into union became entangled in

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Venetia non si voleva metter contra il ministro del re di Franza, fece soprasedere, et non volse che si procedesse innanzi.”

<sup>119</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I f. 247rv./MPOIV.319-320.

<sup>120</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I f. 247v-249v./MPOIV.320-323.

the political landscape of the late sixteenth century, especially in the wake of events such as the Battle of Lepanto in 1571.<sup>121</sup> While the crushing defeat of the Ottoman fleet at the hands of John of Austria and the Holy League was only a minor setback in the trajectory of Ottoman naval power, the Europeans rallied behind it and celebrated it as a moment when the political force of Christendom stood up to the Muslims and won. And the Ottomans were not ignorant of this rhetoric. Thus, going forward, all moves toward Christian unity and the supremacy of Rome could be seen much in the same vein.<sup>122</sup>

And it seems that this was how the pasha felt about the Jesuits' efforts; all he needed was a compelling reason to do something about it. Eliano only later realized how far someone like Vento would go in order to convince the Ottomans that the Jesuits were political agents of the pope bent on Catholicizing the Copts in order that they become political dissenters.<sup>123</sup> What is perhaps most telling, however, is that this never seemed to have occurred to Eliano or the others before, at least not through their correspondences. Eliano, Gregory, and Santa Severina were well aware of how these diplomatic power structures worked, and they were very much engaged in the efforts to modernize the Church and build a strong Catholic identity on a global scale. However, the evangelizing imperative and their belief in the sanctity of the mission forced them to set aside some of their larger political concerns, all in the name of saving souls. Therefore, harmony between state building and confession-building, at least for the papal curia, rested on an equilibrium between religious and political authority allied in an effort to consolidate and control society at large. As politicians, Vento and the pasha saw how religious change had political implications as well. The problem was, as much as they would have liked to change matters, by

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<sup>121</sup> Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World*, 68-71.

<sup>122</sup> Andrew C. Hess, "The Battle of Lepanto and Its Place in Mediterranean History," *Past & Present*, no. 57 (November 1972): 53-73. Cf. also John Francis Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleys*, for an examination of the changing nature of naval warfare over the course of the sixteenth century.

<sup>123</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 247v./MPOIV.302.

the end of the sixteenth century, it was the institutions of the state, not the Church, that held the upper hand and dictated how confession-building and the religio-political equilibrium would be. And this was why the Jesuits were arrested and interrogated under pain of death, even if the accusations were false.<sup>124</sup>

It is also clear that Eliano remained intractable despite the obvious political threats when he thought that there was no time better than the present to remain in Egypt. To his credit, Mariani recognized how dangerous and politically challenging it was to travel in Turkish lands, which explains why he sought safe passage from the Sultan, providing all European Christians with free movement for the purpose of faith. But the Ottoman officials were uneasy about this and did not see missionizing as a matter of faith in the same vein as they did pilgrimage to the Holy Land. However, despite the issues he faced, Eliano wished to remain in Egypt, as he believed that the death of the patriarch provided him the perfect opportunity to convince the Copts that union would be best for their spiritual well-being, even if his decision to stay was not politically wise.<sup>125</sup> And so, by mid November, in spite of Vento's presence and the potential he

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<sup>124</sup> For more about the Ottoman understanding of religion and politics as symbiotic loyalties essential to the preservation of the state, cf. Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam*. For more on this process over the centuries in early modern Germany, cf. Joel F. Harrington and Helmut Walser Smith, "Confessionalization, Community, and State Building in Germany, 1555-1870," *The Journal of Modern History* 69, no. 1 (March 1, 1997): 77–101. For Italy, where the missionaries and the pope were from, an important work on the trajectory of religious change and how political and religious identities became more intertwined yet more complicated over time, cf. the various contributions in Ronald Delph, Michelle Fontaine, and John Jeffries Martin, eds., *Heresy, Culture, and Religion in Early Modern Italy* (Kirkville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2006), as well as Wietse de Boer, *The Conquest of the Soul*.

<sup>125</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 248v./MPOIV.305. "Il clarissimo Mariani, per haver nova che un certo Bassà suo grand'amico, è fatto primo vizir presso il gran Turco, opera con diligentiz, sì come esso medesimo ne farà avisato al Cardinale, di cavar un comandamento dal re per noi et altri, che qua overo in altro paese de Turco venessero per trattar con li Christiani del paese del Turco delle cose della fede, che nissuno delli ministeri del re ardisca di molestar detti che saranno a questo effetto, come è stato fatto a noi. Et spero che si otterà facilmente con gran sicurtà per l'avenir de tali. Noi di questo ci siamo molto ralegrati et quando così fosse, o che stiamo qui o in Candia o altrove, giudicamo che saria cosa molto al proposto fermarci, secondo ci è ordinato, maxime sendo hora qui Sede vacante del patriarcha morto li di settembre passato, et con la nova elletione che si deve far tra sei mesi, potria esser che facessimo quello che fin hora non si ha potuto fare, principalmente havendo dalla nostra parte quasi tutti quelli a chi tocca ad elegerlo et maneggiar questo negocio."



could conspire against the Jesuits again, Eliano declared his intention to stay in Cairo and carry forth his apostolic mission.<sup>126</sup>

### **The end of the mission**

Eliano's views changed over the course of the winter, when, after empty efforts with the Copts, the only highlight was receiving a German Protestant pilgrim into the Church. While any conversion was encouraging, this hardly helped move the mission forward.<sup>127</sup> By the beginning of February, Eliano was "full of melancholy and bother," and wished to leave.<sup>128</sup> It was also becoming all the more evident in the court of public opinion that it was Vento who was behind the arrest and that Mariani was equally innocent, and appeared to have been a very good representative of the French crown. But there was still little that could be done about it, as the whole ordeal combined with Coptic intransigence rendered the Coptic mission stale. In Eliano's estimation, the Copts were suspicious and cautious, and the combination of costs, dangers, and doubts caused Eliano to tell Acquaviva that it would perhaps be best to cancel the mission altogether. Should they elect a new patriarch soon, and he be amenable, then Eliano would work to keep the mission going; but Eliano doubted this would happen.<sup>129</sup>

The major problem, however, continued to be Gregory. Despite having lost the support of the French, which severely undercut the mission, Gregory still felt that Eliano should remain. In late February he wrote to Eliano directly explaining to him that he wanted the mission to continue and that he should wait for the election of a new patriarch and see how open he was to

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<sup>126</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 250r./MPOIV.326-327.

<sup>127</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 289r./MPOIV.337-338.

<sup>128</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 250r./MPOIV.342. "Onde sono qui pieno di melancholia et fastidio, et se non fosse che per molte lettere del cardinale vien comandato da parte de Sua Santità che non ci partiamo aspettando novo aviso, certo che harei fatto ufficio con questi creditori che mi lasciassero partir, sendo io qui come in pegno del lor credito."

<sup>129</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 251r-215r./MPOIV.342-345.

union. He charged Eliano to seek out the friendship of this new patriarch in hopes that he could be swayed in matters of doctrine and the primacy of Rome.<sup>130</sup> Likewise, he sent a letter to the new patriarch, who had yet to be elected, imploring him, whoever he was going to be, to listen to Eliano and to follow his advice.<sup>131</sup> And since orders like these would not get to Egypt for weeks, Eliano had to proceed as if he would stay, while secretly hoping to depart. This caused a great dissonance between what was happening in Cairo and how the mission was viewed from Rome. Despite recognizing the political challenges to the mission, Gregory still refused to relinquish the possibility of gaining supremacy over the Copts. This frustration is clear in Eliano's letters as March approached. The letters reflect Eliano's view of himself as a lame duck missionary. Because "I will say nothing else, save that we are here with desire awaiting resolution of what I have to do, whether to stay or to go," Eliano simply could not commit himself to anything.<sup>132</sup>

In a personal letter to Sasso, now in Rome, Eliano again showed that he was torn between carrying forward and going home, and that work with the Copts seemed highly unlikely at this juncture, despite Gregory's wishes. He explained to his former companion that, although the pasha and cadì had come to see that Vento was the culprit and proclaimed Mariani and the Jesuits innocent, Vento was still seeking other means to undermine his rival, leaving Eliano unsettled. Eliano also went into great detail concerning a fair number of slaves that had been freed and some intercepted letters that Eliano had recovered.<sup>133</sup> But throughout the quite lengthy letter, he only mentioned the Copts once, and this in the context of letters confiscated; there was no mention of getting back to the original purpose of the mission. When it appeared in April 1585 that there would be a new patriarch elected, Eliano was a bit more positive, as he planned

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<sup>130</sup> ASV, *Secr. Brev.* 62 f. 236rv.

<sup>131</sup> ASV, *Sec. Brev.* 62. F. 179r.

<sup>132</sup> ARSI, *Gall 106*, f. 252r./MPOIV.356. "qui non dirò altro, salvo che stiamo con desiderio aspettando resolutione di quello ho da dar, o di restar o ritornar, maxime havendo rihavuto li nostri scritti."

<sup>133</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 231rv; 236r./MPOIV.358-363.

to head off to the monasteries of Wadi El Natrun; if one of the monks was elected patriarch, Eliano wanted to be present so that he could engage the patriarch quickly.<sup>134</sup> Eliano then quickly took off for the desert to celebrate Easter, hoping that this could reengage the Copts.

But just as Eliano left for the desert, in Rome Gregory XIII died. He was succeeded by Felice Peretti, who took the name Sixtus V. While it was not immediately apparent at the time, Sixtus would soon prove himself indifferent when it came to the mission to the Copts, seeing it as an unnecessary expenditure, just one of Gregory's many; for, he inherited the quite empty coffers of Saint Peter. And this meant much of Santa Severina's role in the East would be curbed as well.<sup>135</sup> The state of affairs in Egypt was also becoming clearer to Rome, namely that it was better for Eliano to return lest he fall victim to another attack or power play. Both Santa Severina and Acquaviva agreed on this, as did the new pope.<sup>136</sup> But before Eliano's recall from Egypt could even be made, Eliano left Egypt some time before 20 May 1585, and was in Venice by late August, capping off a three-year mission that resulted in nothing.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> ARSI, *Gall 106*, f. 255r./MPOIV.364. "Ma questa mi ha parso sufficiente causa di non partirmi, oltra la speranza che mi danno questi Cofiti che, ritrovandomi qui all'elettione del novo patriarcha che si spera elegeranno dopo Pasqua, io potrei far con lui qualche frutto. Onde sapendo io che sono alquanti religiosi delli Monasterij di San Macario in predicamento di esser patriarcha, dimani mi parto col fratello per San Macario che è lontano da tre giorni di qua, in compagnia di certi monachi del loco per far un poco di prattica con coloro acciò, se alcuno di essi fosse patriarcha, havessi più commodità poi di trattar in material della nostra missione."

<sup>135</sup> Richard P. McBrien, *Lives of the Popes: The Pontiffs from St. Peter to John Paul II* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1997), 292-294.

For more on Gregory and his interests in the Eastern Churches cf. Giorgio Levi Della Vida, *Documenti intorno alle relazioni delle chiese orientali con la S. Sede durante il pontificato di Gregorio XIII* (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1948).

<sup>136</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 294r./MPOIV.372; ARSI, *Gall 98 I*, f. 296r./MPOIV.373.

<sup>137</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 300r./MPOIV.374; ARSI, *Ital. 158*, f. 163r./MPOIV.384. Leaving with him was Francesco Buono. Buono's role in the mission is minimal. He is mentioned infrequently in the correspondence and was arrested with Eliano and Sasso. He does not appear to have performed any significant role beyond assisting Eliano in the day-to-day tasks of the mission.

## Conclusions

As soon as he got word of the Jesuits' arrival in Venice, Acquaviva requested Eliano's presence in Rome to make account of the mission. What Eliano had to report was anything but positive. Despite the hopes coming out of the Synod of Memphis, the circumstances surrounding their arrest and the Copts' fear of being implicated in the Euro-Ottoman political drama that surrounded the transfer of the French consular office from Mariani to Vento meant that every single one of the Jesuits' goals went unfulfilled. Union had not been achieved and the Jesuits were gone from Egypt. And there would not be any Copts coming to Rome for instruction any time soon. It hardly helped that the mission was one very expensive failure.<sup>138</sup> And with Gregory now dead and his successor lacking all interest in the mission, there was little chance of a return to the Copts in the foreseeable future. This was clear when Eliano met with Sixtus on 18 November and the new pope demonstrated himself little disposed to what Eliano had to say.<sup>139</sup>

In many ways the mission was doomed from the start. The masterminds of it all, Gregory and Santa Severina, were in some respects forward-thinking. Gregory was a man of science, and was pivotal in the reorganization of the calendar that bears his name. And he did have some political savvy, which is why he enlisted French help with the mission. But he was also unrealistic. He firmly believed that the Copts would see the light solely because he held the keys of Saint Peter. And while he recognized that the Jesuits' efforts were contingent upon their ability to network politically and diplomatically, Gregory was much like his predecessors in that he never fully appreciated the difficulties the missionaries would face in the hostile political climate of the Ottoman Empire. And despite his ability in some areas, he was fiscally inept,

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<sup>138</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 270rv; 278r./MPOIV.389-390.

<sup>139</sup> ASV, *Liber audientiarum* de Card. di Santa Severina, Armadio 52, vol. 18, f. 395v.

bankrupting the papacy.<sup>140</sup> For his part, Santa Severina, seeing the successes that Antonio Carafa had had with the mission to the Maronites, was determined to make a name for himself as the protector of the Oriental Churches, even if they never wanted his protection. But he never completely understood the difference between Maronites and Copts, between Lebanon and Egypt. Truly, it was Acquaviva and Eliano who were most realistic. Eliano had already performed this mission twenty years before, providing him with a deep understanding of how difficult the mission would be. But it still ended much the same as this one did: failed work with intransigent Copts and a stint in a Turkish prison. Acquaviva, to his credit, was savvy enough to listen to Eliano's wisdom and recognized that this would be a difficult mission, if not a completely unsuccessful one, partly because of the politicking prevalent among European diplomats in the Ottoman Empire.

But why this one failed was not for the reasons the first mission to the Copts did. Yes Coptic resistance played a part, and the high cost and lack of funds did not help. But this mission's failure lay in a complex and intricate web of confessional and political pressures that from the very beginning dictated the viability of the mission. As in most missions, the Jesuits' efforts were tied to the designs of European powers.<sup>141</sup> But what made this mission – and others to the Christian Orient – different was the very peculiar way in which Europe's political leaders were involved. Unlike missions to, say, New Spain or Goa, where the Jesuits tended to work under the authority Spanish and Portuguese crowns, or to Asia where the Jesuits often operated

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<sup>140</sup> Richard P. McBrien, *Lives of the Popes: The Pontiffs from St. Peter to John Paul II* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1997), 291-292.

<sup>141</sup> For example, cf. Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise*. For more on the Portuguese empire, cf. Alida C. Metcalf, "Jesuits in Brazil: Defining the Vision," (787-814) and Ronald Cueto, "The Society of Jesus, Court Politics, and the Portuguese Succession," (877-912), both found in *The Mercurian Project: Forming Jesuit Culture, 1573-1580*, edited by *The Mercurian Project: Forming Jesuit Culture, 1573-1580* (Rome; Saint Louis: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu; Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004). For general histories of the Jesuit missionaries and their role in global politics, cf. Paolo Broggio, *Evangelizzare il mondo: le missioni della Compagnia di Gesù tra Europa e America (secoli XVI-XVII)* (Rome: Carocci, 2004); Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions*. Nicholas P Cushner, *Why Have You Come Here?*

almost completely under the political authority of foreign powers, in the Ottoman sphere Europeans were not in control; they were nevertheless middle men forced to conform to the political and religious currents of Europe's greatest political rival.<sup>142</sup> As a result, there was more to their success or failure than the relative cooperation of Europeans or their missionary subjects; if a given pasha, vizier, or sultan became displeased with a European nation, anyone under that nation's protection could become a victim of a political quarrel that often did not have anything to do with religion.

And that is exactly what happened on this mission. The Jesuits were charged to carry out the work of the Church but were wholly dependent upon Paolo Mariani. As the French consul, he was in the best position to help them. By the 1580s, with the exception of the Turks' archenemy Spain, France had become the most influential European power within the Ottoman Empire. This meant that anyone under the French flag would be protected from threats and would be given safe passage if requested. While the Jesuits must have been aware of this, their loyalties were continually placed with Mariani, not the French crown whose interests Mariani served. And as the events that occurred in the fall of 1584 showed, loyalty to Mariani rather than the consulate was their undoing. Had they recognized Vento as the true French consul, had they shown loyalty to the office and not the man, perhaps the whole ordeal of being imprisoned would have been avoided. But this was not what happened. In fact there was no other option; personal ties and patronage were the driving force behind diplomatic exchange, and the Jesuits were simply doing what everyone else was. For this reason, even though they wanted to do so, the Jesuits could not have prevented their arrest.

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<sup>142</sup> Stuart B. Schwartz, *All Can Be Saved: Religious Tolerance and Salvation in the Iberian Atlantic World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008).

They also lamented the Copts' growing distance after their arrest and attributed it to their ignorance, and blamed the pasha's "Turkish tendencies" for his covetous decision to take Vento's bribe. And they viewed it all as a part of God's mysterious plan for them. And they recognized how personal ties were essential to their success; and consequently they appreciated that this made making enemies quite easy. But how the plot leading to their arrest could be orchestrated by a representative of the French king, or any other European for that matter, was something that troubled them, for it meant actively undermining the will of God. The lengthy depositions into Vento's actions illuminated the course of events for them. In the end, what happened in Ottoman Cairo was the same thing occurring throughout the Mediterranean world. As the official institutions of society, namely the various religious confessions and states, moved toward a more centralized form of organization, they were met with resistance. And they sought to stamp it out. In some cases, it was ages-old heresies and backward practices that needed to be eradicated in the name of reform. But other times, it was a question of territorial control over matters of faith. The rhythm of this new political and religious landscape meant that statecraft put greater emphasis on political consolidation than religious reform. While religion was often central to this process, it would be the state that dictated how and when religious reform would take place. The traditional apostolic mission appeared to be one of these things that came to be driven by the state, or at least operated with its approval. The Jesuits enlisted the bureaucratic machines of European states to aid in their efforts to successfully carry forth their missions to the Ottoman Empire. Obviously, this is not so different from the way other Jesuit missions operated. But missions to the Christian Orient were not extensions of European expansion and early colonization; any European activity in the Ottoman Empire never could be. But that did not mean they worked without the interference of European authorities.

As far as Vento goes, even when Eliano and the others recognized what Vento had planned, they were shocked by his actions and were unable to move beyond what they knew: their trials and tribulations were a part of God's plan. Because his actions were so scandalous, they used the intellectual framework of divine providence to understand what had happened. Embracing the possibility of martyrdom as the means to comprehend the conjurations of a French diplomat captures the essence of the unstable nature of the early modern world. True, Gregory, Santa Severina, and the Jesuits were all well aware that bureaucratic infighting was a part of life, and they did attempt to grapple with the political realities of a changing world. However, their convictions in the righteousness of the mission caused an impasse; for them, the imperatives of the Church should take precedent, and the fact that state institutions saw this differently was unsettling. In their efforts to grasp this, much as anyone does with anything foreign or new, they attempted to familiarize it and rationalize it within the framework of their convictions. But all this did was make it all the more terrifying, all the more bizarre. While they were able to rationalize what had happened, and realized it was one of the consequences of their world, accepting its legitimacy was a completely different thing. In the end, the Jesuits were victims of the very wavelengths of society that enabled the mission to begin in the first place. The mission was set up to fail from the beginning, as it was wholly dependent upon the personal ties of Paolo Mariani; once those fell apart, so did the mission. When it was over, they were left only to scratch their heads and try to figure out what went wrong. And, much like those charged with investigating the demonic possessions in Loudun fifty years later, they never fully did.

As for Eliano, the seasoned veteran of missions to the Christian Orient, this failed endeavor to save souls would be his last. After his return in 1585, Eliano was back at the Collegio Romano. In 1587, he was named a penitentiary of Saint Peter, a post he held until his



death in Rome on 3 March 1589.<sup>143</sup> In many ways, Eliano was a transitional figure, in one sense very much one of the last great heroic missionaries of the sixteenth century in the mold of Jesuit martyrs Francis Xavier or Edmund Campion. He was a major part of the Church's movement toward confessional consolidation that was dependent upon age-old tactics like the persecution of the Jews, something that, because of his background, troubled him all his life. But Eliano also paved the way for others who followed him to the Christian Orient. His work with the Maronites allowed Girolamo Dandini to travel to Lebanon in 1596, and after him Jesuits frequently petitioned the fathers general for permission to travel to the Ottoman Empire. Also, his autobiography and the nature of his letters put him in the new class of missionary who not only reported on the mission, but also reflected upon their encounters and experiences. Eliano, like many who came after him, was as much an ethnographer as he was a missionary. While not the first to do so, Eliano's writings influenced others to investigate more than just the missions themselves. This in part led to the literary genre that became the hallmark of the seventeenth-century Catholic missionary, the travelogue. The product of that genre, the fusion of ethnography and evangelism, is the subject of chapter five.

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<sup>143</sup> ELIANO, Giovanni Battista, *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Volume 42, 474.

## + Chapter Four +

### The Society of Jesus between Rome and the Christian Orient

His firm intention was to stay in Jerusalem, always visiting the holy sites; and he also intended, beyond this devotion, to help souls.  
– Luís Gonçalves da Câmara, S.J., *The Acts of Saint Ignatius*<sup>1</sup>

Out of the internecine warfare between Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain, and his rival, Francis I, King of France, emerged a religious order that would change the spiritual face of Catholic Europe. As their respective armies and the recent split in the Church threatened to rip Europe apart, it hardly seemed that this development would happen any time soon. Unable to settle his differences with Francis, Charles was ill-equipped to combat the spread of Lutheranism within the Empire. And Francis, for his part, failed to secure the European dominance that he had hoped for, and France became rife with religious conflict later in his reign. But from this struggle, the future of the Catholic Church, both within and beyond Europe, became what neither monarch could have envisioned, even in light of the rhetoric of their own ambitions and having styled themselves defenders of the Church. And this change came on 20 May 1521, just five days before the Diet of Worms and the condemnation of Martin Luther. As Spanish troops defended Pamplona from an advancing French army, a Basque soldier from Loyola, Iñigo Lopez, took a cannonball to the legs. At first, he appeared to be another casualty in the Hapsburg-Valois power struggle to control Italy and the rest of Europe; he was crippled and no longer useful in Charles' fight against the hydra of France, Protestantism, and the Ottomans. However, the young soldier recovered from his injuries, even if he now walked with a limp that reminded him of his soldierly past. While convalescing, he was unable to find his usual reading

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<sup>1</sup> P. Luís Gonçalves da Câmara, *Acta Patris Ignatii scripta a P. Lud. De Camera*, 45. "Su firme propósito era quedarse en Hierusalem, visitando siempre aquellos lugares santos; y también tenía propósito, ultra desta devoción, de ayudar las ánimas/ Firmiter *autem* constituerat ut Hierosolymis remanerat, ut loca illa sancta semper inviseret, et animabus prodesset."

materials, tales of chivalric knights defending the honor of their lords and ladies. Instead, all that was available to him were the *Vita Christi* of Ludolph of Saxony and Jacopo de Voragine's *Golden Legend*. The two works stressed first and foremost an introspective meditation on salvation and the individual's relationship with Christ. As a result, the former soldier, moved by the trauma he suffered in battle and the spiritual message undergirding these two texts, decided to dedicate his life to the service of God.<sup>2</sup>

It was unclear exactly what the young Iñigo thought dedication to God was. However, he resolved very early on that a pilgrimage to Jerusalem would be a part of it. And so, in 1523, he set off from Spain for the Holy Land. Arriving there from Venice, his stay was cut short, as he was expelled due to growing political tensions.<sup>3</sup> Discontented, he returned to Spain to study Latin. He furthered his studies at the University of Alcalá and then Salamanca. Having completed his studies in Spain, he traveled to the University of Paris in 1528, earning a Master of Arts in 1535. It would be there that Iñigo met the six men who remained his closest companions for the rest of his life: the Spaniards Francis Xavier, Alfonso Salmeron, Diego Laínez, and Nicolas Bobadilla; the Frenchman Pierre Favre (anglicized as Peter Faber); and Simão Rodrigues of Portugal. The group then made its way to Italy, not before recruiting three Frenchmen, Claude Jay, Paschase Bröet, and Jean Codure. The desire to travel to Jerusalem to "help souls," whatever that meant, became central to the nine companions' spiritual mission. However, time and time again political circumstances precluded any chance of fulfilling this goal. And so, in 1539, as they agreed that reaching Jerusalem was not feasible, they submitted themselves to the pope.<sup>4</sup> So on to Rome they went. A year later, Pope Paul III issued *Regimini militantis ecclesiae*, the papal

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<sup>2</sup> Saint Ignatius of Loyola, "Reminiscences," in *Personal Writings*, trans. Joseph A. Munitz and Philip Endean (London: Penguin Books, 1996), 13-14.

<sup>3</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 24-26

<sup>4</sup> Thomas M. Lucas, *Saint, Site, and Sacred Strategy: Ignatius, Rome and Jesuit Urbanism* (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1990), 29; O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 28-32.

bull that officially recognized the Society of Jesus as a religious order within the Catholic Church, with Iñigo, or as he is better known, Ignatius Loyola, as its first father general. It would be from this moment that these nine men officially began to influence early modern Catholicism.

And the idea of a return to the Holy Land never ceased to be on their agenda; as the first three chapters have shown, the Society of Jesus actively sought to missionize in the Christian Orient in order to save the souls of groups such as the Copts and Maronites. The Jesuits who carried out these missions honored Ignatius' wishes to serve the spiritual needs of the Near East: it should be remembered that the leading missionary, Eliano, was a close pupil of an aging Ignatius; and despite his doubts about the viability of Catholicizing the Copts, Diego Laínez wholeheartedly supported Eliano and Rodríguez during their time in Egypt. And in the mission to the Maronites and the second mission to the Copts, again Jesuit leaders strove to work with the missionaries, providing them with the tools necessary to achieve their objectives. For the Society of Jesus, work in the Near East was not solely an essential component of the larger nature of Jesuit spirituality and ministry that came to be the hallmark of the Church; because it was Ignatius' original purpose of the order he founded, it forever held a special place in the Society's vision of itself.

The problem was that in the early years the Jesuits had to rely on the papal curia and high ranking churchmen in order to finance and organize these missions. The unintended result was that the patrons of the missions imposed upon them their own views, expectations, and methods of execution. At times, these meshed with the Jesuits' needs. But often, the expectations of their patrons did not match the realities of what the Jesuits experienced. This created a problem for the trajectory of the missions, and partly contributed to their inevitable failures. The Jesuits were more realistic and open minded about the prospects of the missions, but their patrons were often

heavy-handed, expecting the righteousness of their cause to be sufficient for conversion. While the Jesuits were far from experts on religious life in the Ottoman world (Tommaso Raggio showed us that), the Church hierarchy in Rome was even more removed, and this was apparent in their directions for the Jesuits and in their correspondences with Eastern and Oriental Christians. While in some cases, the papal curia was instrumental in the successes the Jesuits had, such as Gregory XIII's opening of a college for the Maronites in Rome, men like Gregory himself failed to comprehend the ecclesiological and political makeup of the Christian Orient, and all the variations within it. From the Society's earliest years until the death of Gregory in 1585, the Society of Jesus found itself caught between the expectations of the Roman Church and the realities of missionizing in the Christian Orient. This chapter tells that story.

### **Before the missions: Ignatius and the early Society in the Near East**

In the decade following *Regimini militantis ecclesiae*, the Society of Jesus moved forward in its spiritual mission. While the plan to travel to Jerusalem and elsewhere had been the driving force behind Ignatius' vision for the Society, it soon became clear that the papacy's vision for the Jesuits and the Society's own desire to help souls in all matters meant that itinerant preaching and instructing would not suffice. The decision to become more sedentary had two advantages for the Jesuits. First, it allowed for the construction of churches and colleges where the Jesuits could train new or future members. Secondly, it enabled the Society to become more structured and organized, making the Society more efficiently governed. While Ignatius was against it at first, he quickly saw how the creation of a network of Jesuit churches and missions throughout Christendom could benefit the faithful by providing strategic locations whence the Jesuits could promulgate the path to salvation. While mobility was curbed, the proliferation of

Jesuit communities ensured the continuation of what Ignatius' protégé, Jerome Nadal, meant when he claimed that "the world is our house."<sup>5</sup> Also, this reflects how, in actuality, there was no set plan. In many ways, the decision to become a more sedentary rather than itinerant order had more to do with pragmatic decisions about what the Society saw as beneficial at the time.

In its first tumultuous decade, around the same time that Jesuits began to acquire churches, approximately 1545, they also began to open colleges, which were just groups of Jesuits living in communion. With papal approval, they often lectured at local universities, such as in Paris or Padua. However, it soon became clear that the Italian model of the university did not fit well with Ignatius's pedagogical views. Ignatius and other Jesuits felt that the Italian model did not allow for quick progress through the curriculum for advanced students, unlike the Parisian scholastic model under which the original six were trained. As a result, advanced Jesuits began drills and lectures on the Parisian model for other Jesuits within the college. These extra sessions were originally supplemental; they were not designed to replace the university lectures. For most of the 1540s, this was the norm. Jesuits attended universities while supplementing the lectures within the Jesuit colleges. This would change in 1547 when the Jesuit college in Messina opened its doors, instructing the sons of the nobility of Messina in theology, cases of conscience, classics, rhetoric and grammar. And Jesuit schools slowly began to open up all over Europe.<sup>6</sup> But despite these developments in the 1550s, the Society remained unstable, relying on patrons and the papacy for its survival.

As a result of this, missions to the Near East were seen as neither beneficial nor pragmatic due to both the political climate and the nascent structural integrity of the early Society. The Dutchman Gaspar Berze passed through Egypt on his way to Goa in 1547, giving

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<sup>5</sup> Jonathan Wright, *God's Soldiers*, 51.

<sup>6</sup> O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 202-207. Much of this is discussed in Chapter One.

us the first Jesuit description of the Christian Orient.<sup>7</sup> And the few Jesuits who did travel there risked imprisonment and death. While he was able to baptize one man, Miguel de Nóbrega was arrested in Masqaţ (present-day Oman) and was transported to a Cairene prison in 1553, where he was eventually freed due to the good graces of the Venetian consul, Daniele Barbarigo.<sup>8</sup> But Nóbrega did not intend to stay, as he soon planned to head south to Ethiopia to find Prester John.<sup>9</sup>

This haphazardness slowly began to change. By the mid 1550s, the idea of a Jesuit presence in the Holy Land began to be considered more seriously. However, much like future endeavors, these ideas came not from within the Society itself, but from higher up. Recognizing the Jesuits' pedagogical successes, Pope Julius III desired to establish Jesuit colleges in Jerusalem, Cyprus, and Constantinople. And so, on 6 October 1553, with the bull *Pastoralis officii cura*, Julius did just that.<sup>10</sup> Add to it a donation of 500 ducats for the construction of the college in Jerusalem from an unnamed Spanish nobleman, and it appeared that the Jesuits' endeavors of opening and running colleges would spread to the Christian Orient.<sup>11</sup> And some implored Ignatius to allow them to go, like Diego Laínez, who explained to Ignatius that he wished to “die well” there in the service of God.<sup>12</sup> And Simão Rodrigues had traveled to the Holy Land to determine where a Jesuit presence would best serve the interests of the Church.<sup>13</sup> He wrote to Ignatius in 1555 that he knew of a Cistercian who was willing to assist the Jesuits in

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<sup>7</sup> MHSI, *Documenta Indica*, 600, 647. “O Nile passa por Egypto e nace em Preste Joam e vem rebenter em Egypto, o qual se conhece pelos crocodilos e pello verão de Egypto, porque entam vem muito cujo porque então hé inverno no Cabo de Boa Esperança onde elle nace, nas terras do Preste, e pelo inverno de Egypto vem muito claro, porque então no Cabo hé verão... Estamos aqui também perto do Mar Roxo e o monte Sanctae Chaterinae Sinai, que jaz no estreito de Mequa, junta com a Arabia deserta.” Berze studied at Coimbra, which probably explains why he chose to write in Portuguese rather than the more pervasive Spanish or Italian, or even his native Dutch.

<sup>8</sup> ARSI, *Fondo Gesuitico* 646, *Epistolae selectae III*, 159 ff.1r-2v.

<sup>9</sup> ARSI, *Goa 10 I*, f. 275rv; Archivio di Stato, Rome, *Gesuiti Epistolario*, box 347.

<sup>10</sup> BAV, *Rossiana* 4317, n. 7 ff. 53r-57v.

<sup>11</sup> ARSI, *Regest.* II, f. 49rv; ARSI, *Regest.* II f. 173rv.

<sup>12</sup> MPOI.19-20.

<sup>13</sup> ARSI, *Hist. de Soc. Iesu n.13*, 3°.

establishing themselves in Palestine and Cyprus, as he knew first-hand that the Maronite Patriarch, Mousa Saade el-Akari, requested a Catholic college at Mount Lebanon.<sup>14</sup> But in the end, the colleges were never established; political and religious circumstances did not allow it.<sup>15</sup> Rodrigues, as early as 1554, recognized the difficulties that the Jesuits faced, such as how he would be forced to dress as a Franciscan, the only order firmly established in the area.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, it was neither the Ottomans nor even the Eastern or Oriental Christians themselves, that was the biggest obstacle to the Jesuits' efforts to establish the three colleges. Ignatius' secretary and closest confidant Juan de Polanco explained that the Franciscans were not happy about Jesuits having colleges in the area. As they were the custodians of the Holy Sepulchre and various other religious sites, they felt that the Society, this new religious order of upstarts with far too much liberty to be trusted, was intruding on their space.<sup>17</sup> Thus, by the death of Ignatius in the summer of 1556, the Jesuits had yet to make any headway in establishing themselves in the Ottoman Empire; and Polanco feared that without a more concerted effort from the papal curia, it did not appear that the Jesuits ever would.<sup>18</sup>

And this was very much the situation in which the Society found itself: by 1560, the Society had begun to establish itself as a potent force in the missionary life of the Church. Through educational programs, the opening of colleges, and ministry work in urban centers, Jesuits had begun to be seen as potentially beneficial agents of the papacy's desire to reclaim for itself rule over a united Christendom. And surely, the papacy wanted the Christian Orient, much as it always had, to be well within its sphere of influence. This explains why the popes wanted

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<sup>14</sup> ARSI, *Epist. Roder., Bobad., Natal. Et Pol.* N. 16, 1ae serie; ARSI: *Regest.* III f. 452rv. This is also reiterated in a letter from Polanco to Francis Borgia from 23 December 1555. Cf. ARSI, *Regest.* III, f.223rv.

<sup>15</sup> Juan de Polanco, *Chronicon*, MPOI.18

<sup>16</sup> MPOI.22-23.

<sup>17</sup> MHSI, *Chron.* VI 458-459

<sup>18</sup> ARSI, *Regest.* V, ff. 27v & 28r.



Jesuit colleges in the Ottoman Empire: they would provide a means through which the errors and heresies that plagued the Christian Orient would be eradicated via a sound educational foundation in the basic teachings of the Catholic Church. As this seemed to be working well throughout Europe, there was no reason why it could not work in the East. And in theory, Jesuit efforts to missionize in the Ottoman Empire were compatible with this. No one within the Society would have questioned the veracity of papal primacy to salvation; that was, after all, a central part of Catholic belief. The difference, however, was in how that should be achieved. For the papacy, it, along with basic doctrinal teachings, was central to the agenda of Catholicizing the Christian Orient. But the Jesuits realized it was not as simple as that. The problem, of course, was that the Near East was nothing like Catholic Europe where Jesuit colleges predominated or Protestant Europe where Jesuits clandestinely sought to keep Catholicism alive. Political turmoil easily upset their efforts, and the Jesuits were relying on the good graces of Ottoman authorities and European diplomats. In the 1550s, we already see these tensions mounting. As the 1550s came to a close, and planning for the first mission to the Copts began, these tensions became more acute for the Jesuits. The problem was that the Jesuits were dispatched to “save souls,” their usual objective, by Pius IV and Gregory XIII, two popes who had very clear understandings of themselves as the ultimate savers of souls. While these men both gave their support to the Jesuits’ efforts in the Near East, for both pontiffs, the Jesuits were, first and foremost, papal vicars funded by the papacy and cardinal-protectors appointed by the popes. As a result, the Jesuits’ efforts, regardless of how they desired to react to the realities of the Christian Orient, hinged upon the papacy’s and the curia’s willingness to compromise and the Jesuits’ need to follow orders. Sometimes this happened. Other times, not. What occurred as a result was a three-decade long struggle to figure out how to find a balance between the two.

## Diego Laínez, Pius IV, and the problem of conflicting ecclesiologies

When letters from Patriarch Gabriel VII arrived in Rome, Pius IV immediately saw them as an overture for union. The problem, as it played out on the mission, was that the Patriarch was not actually in a strong enough position to make such a choice, even if it was what he desired. For Pius, it was simple: as the head of the Church, the patriarch should be its unquestionable leader. However, the Copts' ecclesiological structures did not allow for this. And Diego Laínez, who was skeptical of the mission and the patriarch's envoy Abraham for several reasons, partly saw the flaw in Pius's logic. The problem was, as we saw in Chapter One, Pius viewed himself as the supreme guardian of the Church. While, on the whole, there was little that Laínez could do to change Pius's mind, Laínez did attempt to find ways to navigate Pius's desires for union, the Copts' request for assistance, and the Society's impulse to care for their souls. While finding that balance did not actually happen in the end (Eliano wound up in prison instead), Laínez looked for avenues of compromise between what was expected and what was possible.

Diego Laínez, one of the first six Jesuits, was born in Almazán in Castile in 1512. Like Cristóbal Rodríguez and other Spanish Jesuits, Laínez was a *converso*. He too studied at Alcalá before moving on to the University of Paris where he met Ignatius and the other four companions. Once in Rome, Laínez quickly established himself as one of the Society's brightest members, and Paul III greatly admired his theological skills. In 1546, the pontiff sent Laínez, along with Alfonso Salmeron, to Trent as his official papal theologians. By the mid-1550s, Laínez's prowess as a preacher and theologian was well known throughout the Church; and he was continually consulted by the papal curia and others over the course of the Council of Trent. And many Jesuits had recognized that in addition to his theological prowess and longevity in the Society, his close bond with Ignatius and his management skills as displayed at Trent had made

him the perfect successor to Ignatius. He was, after all, a logistical mastermind in a theologian's body.

Upon the death of Ignatius in 1556, Laínez was named Vicar General of the Society, acting as such until the General Congregation in 1558, at which he was elected Superior General on the first ballot. During his generalate, which lasted until his death in 1565, the Society experienced a period of rapid growth in all theatres of ministry. In addition to the opening of schools at a rate that increased every year, the Society acquired numerous churches; began countless ministries in Catholic Europe's urban centers; created new provinces; and sent missionaries throughout Europe and to Africa, Asia, and the Americas. And it was under Laínez that Jerome Nadal began his visitations to Jesuit colleges and residences throughout Europe that were designed to regulate the organizational structure and efficiency of the Society through the institution of the *Constitutions*, the rules and regulations composed by Ignatius.<sup>19</sup> Of course, all of this occurred with Pius's and his predecessor Paul IV's full support. They, and others within the curia, saw the Society under Laínez as essential to the expansion and solidification of the Church's position in the world. Yet, it often caused tensions between the Society and its ministry on one hand, and the papacy's vision for Laínez's subordinates on the other.<sup>20</sup>

Given his close relationship with Laínez, it came as no surprise that Pius IV selected the Society of Jesus to head the Church's first true efforts in the better part of a century to seek union with the Coptic Orthodox Church.<sup>21</sup> The selection of Rodríguez and Eliano, a theologian and an Arabic speaker, two things absolutely necessary for the mission to succeed, also showed that both Pius and Laínez were in accord in one regard: theological debate would undoubtedly be

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<sup>19</sup> Ignatius Loyola, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970).

<sup>20</sup> MHSI, *Lainii Monumenta*, "Lainii Vitae Summarium," vii-xii.

<sup>21</sup> The last true attempt was at the Council of Florence. See Hamilton, *The Copts and the West*, 51-57.

central to the conversion of any Christian group in the Near East. However, Láinez and Pius diverged on one principal matter, and that was how much liberty in their work with the Copts the Jesuits should be given. The problem again centered on Pius's understanding of why the mission was actually called in the first place, which goes back to the misunderstanding of the letters bearing the seal of Gabriel VII. Pius read the letters as clear proof that the patriarch wanted union and submission to Rome; if he felt otherwise or believed Gabriel was the least bit apprehensive, Pius probably would have acted differently. However, that was not the case; Pius saw an opportunity for union and stopped at nothing to achieve it, including paying for the mission directly from papal funds rather than trying to find a patron. This, of course, meant that Pius never let the Jesuits simply carry out the mission; he played an active role along the way.<sup>22</sup>

This is most evident in his language in the two papal briefs that he dispatched in June 1561. The first was to Gabriel and the second was to Rodríguez. In the former, Pius, despite addressing Gabriel with the reverence of a Patriarch, unambiguously made it known that Rodríguez and Eliano were charged to go to Egypt to convince the Copts that Rome held primacy and that it was due time to end the schism that had separated the two churches for over a millennium; only this way could the souls of the Copts be saved.<sup>23</sup> The absolutely unapologetic nature of the brief then concluded with a gentle reminder: *Datum Romae apud Sanctum Petrum* "Given in Rome at Saint Peter's," the see of the prince of the apostles. There was no ambiguity about what this mission was about, as far as Pius was concerned. This is clear as well in the brief

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<sup>22</sup> MPOII.41 "Házeles S.S. las costas, así del viage, como por el tiempo que estarán en el Cayro, y espérase notable fructo desta mission, por lo que se puede collegir de dos emabaxdores que ha embiadio el dicho patriarcha de Alexandria para sugetarse y unnirse con esta santa sede apostólica."

<sup>23</sup> ARSI, *Instit.* 194 f. 93r./MPOII.38. "...ut cum scias non qui coeperit sed qui perseveraverit salvum fore, opus quod tam pie et sancte incohasti, beati Petri Apostolorum Principis Sedi obedientiam praestans, eiusque in ecclesia catholica principatum reverenter agnoscens, omni cura et diligentia absolvere ac perficere studeas, clero tuo et populis quibus praees post tam inveteratum schisma ad Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae unitatem reducendis, ut membra suo capiti charitate coniuncta et eiusdem fidei vinculo copulata vitalem ab eo participant spiritum..."

the holy father sent to Rodríguez. Pius named Rodríguez his papal nuncio to Egypt and gave him almost unilateral authority to establish churches, monasteries, and residencies in the name of the papacy.<sup>24</sup> And Laínez seconded this when he gave Rodríguez the same level of authority as a Jesuit provincial and the power to found Jesuit colleges and residencies.<sup>25</sup> Likewise, his directives sent to Rodríguez and Eliano reflected much of Pius's goals, particularly Roman primacy. But the brief went directly to Rodríguez rather than to Laínez, completely ignoring the chain of command, exposing just how Pius viewed this mission.

But the language of Laínez's instructions shows his apprehension concerning being too aggressive with the Copts. Considering he was skeptical about the viability of the mission from the beginning, this uneasiness is important to bear in mind. Throughout, Laínez continually explained that the two needed to speak with Gabriel "with the debt of reverence and honor" and that they should always "proceed in a spirit of meekness and patience," lest they drive a wedge between themselves and the Copts.<sup>26</sup> Laínez knew full well, based on the experiences of Jesuits like Miguel de Nóbrega or his close friend Simão Rodrigues, that the Christian Orient would never simply accept papal primacy the way Pius thought it would. This resulted, before the mission even began, in Laínez having to keep the mission afloat, from afar, while still trying to keep Pius content with the progress of the mission even though he knew Pius's desires were not easily satisfied. Other Jesuits in Rome also recognized that the mission would not be an easy one, and that perhaps Pius's initiatives could be too heavy handed. Word quickly spread throughout

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<sup>24</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, 9v./MPOII.40. "Praetera quascumque ecclesias ac monasteria et domus cujuscumque a Sede Apostolica approbati ordinis erigendi et instituti, ac esi sic erectis et institutis, indulgentiam septem annorum et totidem quadregenarum etiam perpetuo duraturum, concedendi ac elargiendi..."

<sup>25</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, 10v./MPOII.42. "Omnes ergo et singulas gratias quae tam privatae nostrae Societatis hominibus quam rectoribus collegiorum vel domorum praepositis, aut etiam provincialibus, ad sui muneris functionem et proximorum aedificationem concedi solent, tibi, nulla excepta, quam amplissime conferimus, in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti."

<sup>26</sup> ARSI, *Institut.* 187 f. 52rv./MPOII.44-45. This is also reproduced in MHSI, *Lainii Monumenta V*, 1560-1561, 576-581.

the Society that Pius had given Rodríguez unilateral power and that the Jesuits were serving exclusively as papal nuncios.<sup>27</sup> Cristóbal Madrid, who handled the day-to-day running of the Society during one of Laínez's administrative trips to France, explained that the mission would be very difficult and was in need of much prayer if it was to carry forth with Pius in charge.<sup>28</sup> Likewise, Juan de Polanco had reservations about the mission and knew well that gingerliness would be necessary. Polanco felt that Rodríguez and Eliano needed to proceed with caution and limit how aggressive they were in their efforts, as the myriad threats to their safety needed to be weighed equally with baptizing Copts.<sup>29</sup> Simply being papal nuncios was not adequate.

But it was just at the moment when leading Jesuits such as Laínez, Polanco, and Nadal recognized the difficulties the mission would present to the Society that Pius again decided to intervene, this time pushing for a Coptic delegation at Trent. While Pius had sent a brief to Rodríguez and Eliano in mid-August to implore Gabriel to send a delegation, here he went beyond allowing his nuncios the freedom to carry out the mission at their own discretion.<sup>30</sup> Instead, Pius wrote directly to Gabriel, beseeching the patriarch to help end the heresies plaguing the Church. The brief's language is to the point: the Roman Church has convened a council to end divisions in the Church and unequivocally promulgate what the truth, capital *T*, of the faith

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<sup>27</sup> One such example is when Jerome Nadal, at this point in Spain, received notice from Venice that Rodríguez had been named nuncio to the Copts and that Pius wanted the mission to center on obedience to Rome. Cf. ARSI, *Epist. Hisp. 1559-1564*, ff 442r-443v.

<sup>28</sup> MHSI, *Lainii Monumenta V, 1560-1561*, 583. "...y de otros dos que por orden y obediencia de S.S. asimesmo partem mañana en compañía de los embajadores que aquí estavan del patriarcha de Alexandria de Egipto, a visitarle de parte de esta santa sede, y tratar con él de lo que toca a la religion católica; la qual mission aunque tiene dificultades, speramos ha de ser de gran servicio divino y aumento de la religion cathólica."

<sup>29</sup> MHSI, *Lainii Monumenta V, 1560-1561*, 625. "Bien será scriver a Portugal del rescate de Fulgentio Freye, y attender a él, y dar aviso al P.D. Rodríguez, por si él fuese primero en el Cayro que oltro. Del quedar por allá o no el dicho Fulgentio es cosa che requiere consideration, que podría ser fuese el quedar dañoso. El mismo P.D. Rodríguez podrá bien tener juizio en esta cosa quando allá se hallare. Del modo de reducir al baptismo por una media violentia los de aquellas tierras, es cosa digna de consideration si es expediente o no, y miraráse en ello antes que se scriva."

<sup>30</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN 86*, f. 77rv./MPOII.65-66.

was, beyond doubt.<sup>31</sup> Of course, this automatically put Gabriel in a difficult position, one that could possibly alienate him from the community, as it meant acknowledging Roman primacy in matters of the faith; this partly explains why a delegation was never sent, even though Gabriel strongly considered doing so. And from the perspective of Rodríguez and Eliano, Pius's intervention here, when the two were very two capable nuncios, was a complete circumvention of the authority Pius gave them. Additionally, they were still in Venice when he dispatched his brief to Gabriel; so by the time the nuncios arrived, they were perceived solely as agents of Pius and his desires for Coptic recognition of papal supremacy. This put Rodríguez and Eliano in a tight spot. The missionaries understood that papal orders would have to come first; but they recognized that simply strong-arming the Copts into submission to Rome would be impossible, and that such an assertive stance from Pius would result only in resistance.

The other issue was Ottoman preoccupations with the large presence of Europeans living within the empire. While merchants and pilgrims were openly welcomed, anyone perceived as a rogue agent bent on undermining Ottoman authority was identified as a grave threat. So, carrying on with Pius's plans would serve only to get Rodríguez and Eliano expelled or worse. And it was right as reports rolled in to Europe about previous experiences of Jesuits in the Near East that Laínez and others began to fear for Rodríguez and Eliano's safety. While Miguel de Nóbrega's story was well known, it was the disquieting revelations of the travails of Fulgentio Freire that aroused Laínez' greatest fears. In December 1561, with the mission in full swing, two reports, those of Baltasar da Costa and Luís Fróis, told of Freire's experiences.<sup>32</sup> Freire was on his way to Goa via Ethiopia on a Portuguese vessel in September 1560. While sailing for India in the

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<sup>31</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86, f. 78rv./MPOII.66.

<sup>32</sup> Da Costa's letter is found in MHSI, *Documenta Indica* Volume 5, n° 40, 249. Fróis' is found in MHSI, *Documenta Indica* Volume 5, n° 41, 262-263.

Arabian Sea, the crews of the Portuguese flotilla noticed a contingent of Ottoman ships in the distance. A battle ensued, and his ship was overtaken. Freire and others were taken captive and eventually transported to Cairo.<sup>33</sup> His enslavement and forced labor, and the Jesuits' subsequent efforts to free him, demonstrated that despite their usual tolerance of religious minorities the Ottomans were none too keen on individuals bent on upsetting the equilibrium of power. Just as Freire had been arrested for being an agent of the Portuguese crown, if Pius was too forceful in his efforts, Rodríguez and Eliano could be perceived as agents of a papacy under the influence of Philip II, King of Spain, Suleiman the Magnificent's main rival.<sup>34</sup>

All of these problems put Láinez in a difficult position. On one hand, he clearly saw that Pius's vision could undermine the Copts' willingness to cooperate. Likewise, the potential threats the Jesuits faced meant that Pius's goals would be much more difficult to achieve. On the other, he did his best to keep Rodríguez and Eliano informed of these goings on in Rome and to reassure them that the mission could bring some success. In March 1562, he wrote to Cairo, explaining that he sympathized with the issues they had been experiencing since arriving in November 1561. Láinez reminded Rodríguez in particular, who had been ill, that he wished them only the best in health and mind. He further encouraged them to carry on, explaining that through their efforts and sagacity the mission could see some success; he concluded that they should persevere, reminding them that their work served to care for the souls of their lost Coptic

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<sup>33</sup> Biblioteca da Academia das Ciências, Lisbon, *12 Azul* f. 149r-150r./MPOIL.32-33.

<sup>34</sup> The Ottoman-Portuguese rivalry is elaborated upon in Andrew C. Hess, "The Evolution of the Ottoman Seaborne Empire in the Age of the Oceanic Discoveries, 1453-1525," *The American Historical Review* 75, no. 7 (December 1970): 1892-1919. A recent study further evaluates the growth of the Ottomans in the Indian and Arabian seas and partly places this into the context of their rivalry with Portugal. Cf. Giancarlo L. Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*.



brothers.<sup>35</sup> But the nuncios grew increasingly frustrated with their inability to carry out Pius's nearly impossible goals. They wrote to the pontiff directly in April 1562 explaining that the Copts remained obstinate, and they feared that the Copts might be reluctant to send a delegation to Trent. Likewise, by this point Gabriel had grown distant, particularly concerning discussions of papal primacy.<sup>36</sup> However, despite this major setback, Rodríguez and Eliano promised Pius that they would do whatever was necessary to fulfill their spiritual father's wishes.<sup>37</sup> But the letter is much more pessimistic than expected, shedding light on the frustrations the two faced. Despite their desires to keep working, they recognized that the Copts were too obstinate, and that little could be done.<sup>38</sup>

By early April 1562, just as Rodríguez and Eliano were chased out of the Monastery of Saint Anthony of the Desert and as it became quite clear that Pius's desires would most likely go unfulfilled, Laínez was beginning to worry more about Eliano's safety.<sup>39</sup> In a letter to Francis Borja, Laínez expressed concern about persecutions Eliano potentially faced, and explained to his eventual successor that perhaps it would be best to send Eliano elsewhere, perhaps to Spain or Sicily.<sup>40</sup> A week later, on 17 April, Laínez viewed it best to send Eliano home where "his ministry will be very useful, not only at present but also for the future."<sup>41</sup> Laínez's concession

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<sup>35</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 98, f. 104ar-104bv./MPOII.141-142. Laínez's supplication to push forward is particularly poignant: "Perseverad, hermanos, y caminad adelante, que el Señor sera vuestra gloria, y os dará saber y querer y poder todo lo que fuere más a su Gloria y a vuestra perfección y salud eterna."

<sup>36</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 98, f. 120r./MPOII.143-144.

<sup>37</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 98, f. 120v./MPOII.144.

<sup>38</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 98, f. 120v./MPOII.144. "Et con questo finalmente dicono che mia lassarian li Cophti la sua fede. Et è certo che sono più ostinati (a quello che monstrano) che io potrò per lettere significar, maxime Abram ingrato a tanti beneficii et carezzi che ha ricevuto da Vostra Santità."

<sup>39</sup> For the description of this incident cf. ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86 f. 127v./MPOII.157.

<sup>40</sup> MHSI, *Lainii Monumenta VI*, 275. "Con las nuevas del Cayro me e holgado, especialmente de ver el buen ánimo que muestra Rodríguez. Parésceme que se le escriba que siendo la de Baptista persecución personal de quella falsa y mala gente, y abiendo probabilidad de peligro [...] deber cedere, y procurar da embiarle otro, o de España, o de Sicilia."

<sup>41</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 98, f. 131r./MPOII.171. "È di parere Nostro Padre Generale che sesi vedessi che il Padre Battista non può aiutar in coteste bande il prossimo, o non può star di là senza pericolo manifesto della vita, Vostra

here shows that he recognized all too well that the mission would never succeed the way Pius hoped it would. But it also presented another problem: could Laínez recall or could Rodríguez dismiss Eliano? While Rodríguez had the authority to do so as papal nuncio and as *de facto* Jesuit provincial, and surely Laínez did as father general, such a bold move could irrevocably damage the relationship between the papacy and the Society. And given Pius's hands-on approach to the mission, it seemed unlikely that such a move would have been accepted at the Vatican.

While Pius should have known how grave the threats to Eliano actually were (all he had to do was ask), it does not appear that even if he had, he would have done anything about it. After all, threats to missionaries were par for the course. From his perspective, Pius had no reason to think anything was wrong. For in September, Gabriel wrote to Pius thanking him for sending Rodríguez and Eliano. Gabriel began the letter with a lengthy introduction that takes up nearly half the document; in it he called Pius a “glowing star” and the “father of fathers and head of heads and pastor of pastors,” even going so far as to call Pius the “vicar of our redeemer Jesus Christ.” And while he admitted to some confusion concerning the long-term prospects of the mission, he explained to Pius that “because we are all your sheep and from the stock of your charity and superiority,” he fully intended to send Isaac to Trent and support Rome's efforts. Gabriel then closed, explaining that he desired more help with Arabic texts in order to serve the Copts' spiritual needs.<sup>42</sup> Knowing what we do about Pius, this complete acknowledgment of Pius's supremacy on the part of Gabriel surely went to the pope's head. Upon reading it, he would have felt that Coptic acquiescence was within his grasp. The mission had to carry on.

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Riverenza lo rimandi in Italia dove potrà essere molto utile il suo ministero, non solo a se stesso ma anchora alli prossimi.”

<sup>42</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86, f. 162rv./MPOII.204-206.

Thus, because of Pius's adamancy that the mission move forward, Laínez's fears for Eliano's safety seem to have fallen on deaf ears. But as we already know, those fears were not the usual paranoia and anxieties of a diligent father general concerned about his missionary sons, the types that accompanied every overseas mission. And so, when news reached Rome in January 1563 of Eliano's arrest and furtive flight, Laínez unilaterally condemned the mission and its progress and immediately ordered Rodríguez' return to Italy.<sup>43</sup> And by April 1563, with Rodríguez's departure from Cairo, the mission definitively ended. Laínez was elated that both men landed safely in Europe, as it meant their skills, seemingly wasted in one of Pius's unrealistic civilizing missions, could be reapplied to something more fruitful. But it also meant that Laínez ended Pius's mission. Papal autocracy failed.

Eliano remained in Rome until called to Lebanon in 1577. Rodríguez traveled about quite regularly, holding several posts in the Society. And he was even present at the Battle of Lepanto. But despite everything that had occurred on the mission, despite Eliano's arrest and flight and despite the Copts' open resistance to the Jesuits' efforts, Pius remained convinced that his vision for a universal Christendom was attainable in his lifetime, and for good reason. At some point in 1564, a letter arrived in Rome from Gabriel. It began with a lengthy opening that lauded Pius as the father of fathers and the "evangelist of the orthodox faith." And there was even a reference to Matthew 16:18-20, that most Catholic scriptural justification for papal primacy. Gabriel was likewise saddened by the treatment Eliano had received at the hands of the Jews and Ottomans, explaining that it, sadly, cut short the Jesuits' efforts with his flock. The letter concluded with the suggestion that, as had been the tradition over the centuries, a regular correspondence between

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<sup>43</sup> MHSI, *Lainii Monumenta* Volume 8, 570-571.

himself and Pius should continue.<sup>44</sup> Reading all of this, like reading the letter from 1562, only would have fed Pius's ego. Clearly, he would have thought that the Copts wanted his help; their leader viewed him as the head of all believers and the one poised to save them from damnation. But Gabriel, like all the other Coptic patriarchs who preceded and followed him, was never the type of spiritual leader of the Copts the way Rome thought he was. Despite styling themselves much as the bishops of Rome did, *papa*, they were nevertheless much more dependent upon their archbishops and lay benefactors than the Roman pontiff ever was.<sup>45</sup>

But it is easy to see why Pius would have blamed everyone else for the mission's failure. There were so many problems that he had never expected: Laínez was skeptical from the beginning; the Copts resisted; the Jesuits became disillusioned; the Jews conspired; Ottoman tyranny went to the highest bidder. But if Pius had had his ears to the ground and had listened to Laínez and others a little more closely, if he had been just a little more skeptical of Abraham as Paul IV had been, or had he realized that Gabriel was not nearly as powerful in Egypt as Pius was in Rome, then he would have realized that Coptic submission was more complex than simply willing it. But, of course, that is not how it happened. And it did not appear that his successors would see this either. While Pius V never called a mission to the Near East, he was an ardent reformer and militant defender of the faith, having called together the Holy League that defeated the Ottomans at Lepanto; it was he who unrealistically freed English Catholics from their loyalty to their Protestant queen, Elizabeth. His successor, Gregory XIII, whom we have already met, likewise saw himself as the spiritual ruler of the world. And while some within the curia were more attentive to the complexities of the Christian Orient, Gregory and some of those

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<sup>44</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 86, ff. 158r-161v./MPOII.312-315.

<sup>45</sup> For more on this relationship between the Coptic patriarchs and lay leaders, called archons, see Armanios, *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt*.

closest to him also failed to listen more closely to those who knew well the troubles of convincing the Christian Orient of this.

### **The two protectors**

In the years between the end of the mission to the Copts in 1563 and the beginnings of the mission to the Maronites in 1577, communication between the Society of Jesus and the Christian Orient was rather quiet. Other orders, mainly the Franciscans, maintained their presence in the Near East, especially in Jerusalem and in Constantinople. But while a direct connection did not exist, this is not to say that there were no efforts to foster bonds, or at the very least to lay the groundwork for future missions within the Society. In late 1565, Juan de Polanco dispatched a memo to the entire Society imploring fellow Jesuits to learn Arabic and that those who already knew it should render their services to the betterment of the faith and serve the needs of the Christian Orient however possible. He also called for the foundation of an Arabic printing press, whence they could produce an Arabic grammar and dictionary to accompany an Arabic New Testament. Polanco further explained that Eliano would head up this effort, and that he was to work closely with the Eastern and Oriental Christians who were to come to Rome.<sup>46</sup> It was at this point that Eliano settled into his chair as professor of Hebrew and Arabic at the Collegio Romano, where he would instruct fellow Jesuits in the languages necessary for work in the Christian Orient. Therefore, the 1560s and early 1570s, rather than being seen as a period when the Jesuits forgot about the Christian Orient, should be seen instead as a formative time in which the Society prepared its novices for work in the Near East.

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<sup>46</sup> MHSI, *Polanci Complementa* Volume 1, 560-561.

At the same time that the Jesuits were poised to reengage the Near East, a new pope ascended the throne. He was politically connected, an active reformer, and was extremely serious about spreading Catholicism to the Near East. He was Gregory XIII. Born 7 January 1502 and given the name Ugo, he was a Boncompagni, one of the most powerful families in Bologna. A lawyer and theologian, Ugo played an active role in the reforms carried out during the pontificates of Paul IV, Pius IV, and Pius V; and he was a master administrator. Recognizing this, Pius IV named him Cardinal-Priest of San Sisto Vecchio, and he also served as papal legate to Philip II of Spain. His time in Spain proved formative, as Philip became his very close friend and patron. Upon Pius V's death, an impressively short conclave of barely a full day resulted in Ugo's election on 13 May 1572. And he chose to take the name of the first Church reformer, Gregory the Great (r. 590-604). But there were some grumblings that the election was rigged, most likely by Philip, and that Gregory would be nothing more than a Spanish tool. The biggest malcontent was Gregory's opponent and the other major candidate for the papacy, the cardinal-bishop of Frascati, Alessandro Farnese, who was also the grandson of Paul III. But Spanish gold found its way into Farnese coffers, and questions of nepotism and cronyism quickly went away.

But a most interesting thing happened. The relationship between Philip and Gregory was not simply one of Spanish hegemony in Rome, and Gregory was certainly not a puppet pontiff subject to Philip's designs. Yes, Gregory supported Philip in political matters, gave many concessions to the Spanish crown, and further relied on the Spanish for the military defense of the Papal States. But a lot of Philip's money found its way to Rome in the form of both patronage and tithes. And Spanish protection meant that Gregory did not need to fund his own military to defend the Papal States, freeing the papacy to invest in other endeavors, such as the

beautification of the city of Rome and further bureaucratization of the curia.<sup>47</sup> And Gregory and Philip also worked as partners in continuing the reforms of the Church, an arena where Philip conceded to Gregory as his spiritual father. Therefore, with the backing of Spanish gold and arms, Gregory was poised to lead the Church forward in its effort to implement the Council of Trent, which he felt would be his great legacy.

Included in this, of course, was the Christian Orient, starting with the Maronites in 1577. And when Ar-Ruzzy asked Gregory for help, it seemed like the perfect moment: Gregory was politically and financially secure enough to assist the Maronites, and the Jesuits had intellectually prepared themselves to carry out Gregory's mission. In the abstract, it seemed that Rome was ready to begin the process of Catholicizing the Christian Orient. And the Maronites seemed to be the first step; by the end of the mission in 1582, they had fully accepted all of the Jesuits' proposals for reform.<sup>48</sup> What made Gregory the perfect pope for these missions is that he knew when to get involved and when to delegate. And for these missions, delegate he did. The man he chose to oversee the mission to the Maronites was, of course, Antonio Carafa. Born in Naples in 1538, his path toward being named Cardinal Protector of the Maronites in 1569 was tumultuous. He was camerlengo (chief financial administrator of the papal curia) and commander of the papal guard under his uncle, Paul IV. But when Pius IV, Paul IV's political rival, was elected pope, Antonio along with other members of the Carafa family were ostracized from the Church. Saved from the death sentence that struck some of his relatives, he was forced out of Rome, turning his focus toward patristic studies and canon law. Upon the election of Pius V in 1566, he was reinstated as a cardinal. In 1568, Pius V recalled him to Rome, where he served as head Vatican

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<sup>47</sup> Thomas Dandeleet, *Spanish Rome*, 72-79.

<sup>48</sup> Even if some of the reforms did not necessarily hold. In 1596 Girolamo Dandini returned to oversee a synod to ensure that Eliano's reforms had been maintained. See the following chapter.

librarian, sat on the congregations for the application of the Council of Trent and the revision of the Vulgate, and was lead editor for a new edition of the *Corpus Iuris Canonici*. He was then named protector of the Maronites in 1569.<sup>49</sup> Carafa was perhaps the best choice. He was, firstly, far more reasonable and realistic than, say, Pius IV. And even though he was a bookish academic, not a missionary, he understood that if the mission was going to succeed, more needed to be done than sending a few Jesuits. He knew that there would need to be a complete missionary machine in place, replete with a printing press and college in Rome, to ensure that work continued long after the Jesuits' departure from Lebanon. And so, even though it was Gregory who called the mission with *Benedictus Deus* and *Semper Judicavimus*, it was Carafa who was in control. It appeared that Gregory had learned a lesson from his predecessors' mistakes. He did not actively interfere.

Interestingly enough, neither did Carafa. Throughout the entire dispute between Eliano and Raggio, Carafa remained relatively silent, leaving much of the leadership to Mercurian. It was only in May 1579 that Carafa wrote to Eliano, explaining that he and Gregory wished Eliano would stay in Lebanon, and that he planned to send the goods and monies requested for the Maronites. And then, the scholar in him came out, as he told Eliano to “attend above all to expurgate heretical books.”<sup>50</sup> And again it was only when Eliano briefly returned from Lebanon that Carafa actively involved himself in the mission's organization. On 23 June 1579, he wrote to Gregory explaining that Eliano had returned with two bright Maronite youths whom Mihail held in high esteem. During his time in Rome Eliano was to proffer a full report of how, upon his

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<sup>49</sup> Cf. Sami Kuri's biography of Carafa in MPOI.457.

<sup>50</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 52v./MPOI.162. “Che si contenta S. Santità che almeno il P. Battista resti per la gran instantia che fa il Patriarca per finir molte cose. Che mandaria quelle robbe domandate per le chiese povere ma non sono mandate per che dubitava che siamo partiti... Che si attenda tutta via à spurgar li libri heretici.”



return to Lebanon, he planned to find success.<sup>51</sup> Carafa also submitted his full report, based on the information he possessed at the time, in order to inform Gregory of all that had occurred on the mission and how the mission should continue in the future.<sup>52</sup>

These letters tell us much about Carafa and his vision of the role of cardinal protector. He knew how to balance controlling the mission while not micromanaging it to death. While there was no ambiguity about his role as the head of the mission, he recognized that actively involving himself the way Pius IV did in Egypt simply would not work. Rather, much as Gregory had delegated the mission to him, he delegated it to Mercurian and the Society. He trusted Eliano and Raggio enough to let them carry out the objectives of the mission without direct interference, recognizing that doing so could undermine the mission and alienate the Maronites much as it had the Copts. But this should not be confused with aloofness or disinterest. Delegation did not mean ridding his hands of the mission or making it someone else's problem. While he gave the missionaries the freedom needed to carry out their goals, the mission's failure would fall on Carafa's shoulders. And when that happened, Carafa was less than pleased, and wanted to know why and how it failed. Once Eliano and Raggio returned to Rome having not reached a favorable conclusion with the Maronites, Carafa swiftly ordered Eliano and Raggio to write their full account of what went wrong and how to avoid these same mistakes again.<sup>53</sup>

And it was Carafa who needed to reassure Patriarch Mihail that the failure was not a failure at all, but just a misstep, and that it did not signal the end of Rome's efforts. Carafa explained to the patriarch in August 1579 that, despite having had to recall the missionaries, work would recommence, this time with Eliano in charge. Carafa also promised him that they

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<sup>51</sup> ASV, *AA. Arm. I-XVIII*, 1766, f. 5rv./MPOI. 175.

<sup>52</sup> ASV, *AA. Arm. I-XVIII*, 1766, f. 1r-4v/MPOI. 176-180.

<sup>53</sup> That full report is inventoried as ASV, *ARM. I-XVIII*, 1765. It can also be found in MPOI.181-187.

would do everything within their power to ensure that the spiritual needs, especially in matters relating to the proper implementation of the sacraments, would not be ignored. Furthermore, Carafa relayed that the two seminarians Mihail had sent to Rome with Eliano were safe in the Eternal City and that Carafa was funding their stay and that he would personally see to it that they were cared for spiritually and intellectually. Carafa then reassured Mihail that the Maronites were not forgotten, and that he was ready to resume the mission by the end of the year.<sup>54</sup>

When the mission restarted in the spring of 1580, Carafa sent off orders to the Jesuits, trusting that the mission was safe in their hands. He also dispatched two brief letters to Lebanon. One was to the secretary of the Ottoman emir to announce the Jesuits' presence and purpose for being in Ottoman territory. This was always a wise move.<sup>55</sup> The second letter was to the Maronite bishops, requesting them to participate openly in a provincial council, headed by Eliano, whom Carafa entrusted to oversee. He told the bishops that through Eliano's "prudence and good will," the council would console them and give them much needed spiritual aid.<sup>56</sup> And then, much like before, Carafa slipped into the background, trusting that the mission was in the sure hands of Mercurian and Eliano. While Eliano constantly kept him abreast of the mission's progress, he never sent another letter to Lebanon, letting Mercurian and then Acquaviva handle the bulk of the correspondence. But when Eliano was sent to Egypt in autumn 1582, Carafa maintained that the work with the Maronites was not over. Of course, so did Eliano. But as Eliano was charged to convert the Copts, it was Carafa who headed the book printing project that seemed to be Eliano's true passion.

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<sup>54</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 55rv./MPOI.188-190. An Arabic translation in Eliano's hand accompanies the original Italian manuscript.

<sup>55</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 58r-59v./MPOI.208-209.

<sup>56</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 106, f. 147r./MPOI.210. "Et dovendosi fare un concilio provinciale, siano le SS.RR. pronte a congregarsi et convenire insieme in tutto quello che dal R.<sup>do</sup>P. Battista Romano, nella cui prudenza et bontà si confida grandemente, le verrà per ordine di Sua Santità et mio proposto, poichè solo per loro consolatione et aiuto spirituale, a petition mia conforme al desiderio delle SS.RR. a N. Signore è piaciuto remandarli."

With Gregory's full support, Carafa began work on what would eventually be the Maronite College, which opened in 1584.<sup>57</sup> Carafa's dedication, as well as Gregory's financial support, made the Maronite College a complete success. In 1585, one of the Maronite College's first students, Yuhanna al-Hasruni, wrote that, in addition to their residence, Gregory and Carafa had given them a church with a beautiful garden that was perfect for contemplation and reflection. And on numerous occasions, they asked for more books, demonstrating their zeal for their education. The Maronites often wrote to Eliano and others seeking books in both Latin and Arabic. The types of books varied and included grammars, Arabic medicinal texts, and standard religious works, such as those of Athanasius of Alexandria, Gregory of Nissa, and Basil of Cesarea.<sup>58</sup> The Maronite youths also never failed to praise everyone involved in providing for them all that they needed during their stay in Rome, particularly Gregory and Carafa. Throughout the rest of the 1580s and into the 1590s, the Maronite College was a successful venture both for the papacy and for the Maronites, whose experiences were overwhelmingly positive. And upon their return to Lebanon, the Maronites continued their praises for Rome. They often longed to be in Rome, but believed that their return to Lebanon was the work of God and strove to carry forth their spiritual duties in the name of the Holy See. And the Maronite bishops, pleased with the success of the Maronite College, desired to send many more Maronites to Rome to strengthen even further their Catholic identity. While all those books, local synods, pastoral visits, and vessels for the liturgy were essential parts of Latinization and provided a multifaceted missionary apparatus for Lebanon, these efforts would be for naught if the Maronites could not sustain the implementation of the reforms once the missionaries left

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<sup>57</sup> For more on the Maronite College, Latin education, and its legacy in the Maronite Church, cf. Nasser Gemayel, *Les échanges culturels entre les maronites et l'Europe: du Collège Maronite de Rome (1584) au Collège de `Ayn-Warqa (1789)* (Beirut: Impr. Y. et Ph. Gemayel, 1984).

<sup>58</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 179./MPOI.121-123.

Lebanon. Therefore, the Maronite College was to be the central component of keeping the Maronites Catholic; and no one knew this better than Carafa. Carafa recognized that pushing the Maronites toward Latinization would always need to be a collaborative effort on the part of both Rome and the Maronites themselves and would have to occur on many levels.

Carafa created a provisional roadmap for how to proceed in the Christian Orient. Sure, the Maronites were unique; acknowledgement of Roman primacy had been achieved centuries before. But collaboration, he thought, would lead to submission of even the most obdurate groups. Convince Eastern and Oriental Christians of their errors through cooperation, not condescension, and surely they would flock to the arms of Mother Rome. But not everyone saw it that way; some were hardliners, demanding submission without compromise. And so, while the scenario could have been different when the Jesuits returned to Egypt in 1582, it was much as it had been in the 1560s: obstinate Copts defending themselves against a perhaps even more obstinate Rome. One man reflected this sentiment, and was therefore the perfect foil to the flexible Antonio Carafa. That was Giulio Antonio Santoro di Santa Severina, cardinal protector of the Oriental Churches. Born in 1532 in Caserta, just outside of Naples, Santa Severina quickly rose through the Church. He was named Archbishop of Santa Severina in 1566, a name he maintained even after Pius V elevated him to cardinal at the age of thirty-eight. He was a brilliant humanist and oriental scholar, and held the position of cardinal protector of the Oriental Churches for over thirty years, from 1570 until his death in 1602. He was wildly intelligent, but perhaps to a fault, causing him to be tenacious but intractable and overly haughty.<sup>59</sup> While he possessed diplomatic savvy and understood how the political nature of Ottoman Egypt could

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<sup>59</sup> Cf. Charles Libois' biography of Santa Severina in MPOIV.442-443. See also Giulio Antonio Santoro, *Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santoro and the Christian East: Santoro's Audiences and Consistorial Acts*, ed by. John Krajcar (Rome: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1966).

impact the mission to the Copts (as it eventually did), Santa Severina lacked Carafa's understanding of how complex conversion could be, and exactly how multifaceted the process was.

This comes through in his rather loquacious letter of instruction to Eliano and Sasso. Santa Severina stressed caution when approaching the Copts' views, and he understood the importance of the patriarch's willingness to see the Jesuits as allies through their association with French consul Paolo Mariani.<sup>60</sup> But Santa Severina believed that the Copts needed a lesson in the history of the Church, and he was just the man to give it to them. The problem was that his view of history was skewed by contemporary views of Roman supremacy as well as a nasty streak of self-righteousness. After establishing the goals of the mission, Santa Severina then gave a seemingly exhaustive list of who, over the centuries, acknowledged Roman authority, as if this would surely convince the Copts of their obduracy. It is dubious at best. Rattling off names such as several Patriarchs of Constantinople as well as the Byzantine emperors Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259-1282) and his son Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282-1328), Santa Severina attempted to establish a precedent for submission to Rome. However, referencing a handful of Greeks and their recognition of papal primacy at the Council of Florence (1431-45) as an argument for why the Copts should submit showed a lack of depth in understanding the Christian Orient, a mistake Carafa never made.<sup>61</sup> For someone who had, by that point, been protector of the Oriental Churches for twelve years, Santa Severina did not grasp even the very basic concept that a Copt would almost certainly never follow a Greek's lead. Santa Severina was clouded by

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<sup>60</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 I*, f. 77r-83r/MPOIV.71-79.

<sup>61</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 I*, f. 83r./MPOIV.79-80. "Il modo di trattar con esso è facile." For more on the Council of Florence and the Eastern Christians' participation in it, cf. Martin Anton Schmidt, "The Problem of Papal Primacy at the Council of Florence," *Church History* 30, no. 1 (March 1, 1961): 35-49, and Deno J. Geanakoplos, "The Council of Florence (1438-1439) and the Problem of Union Between the Greek and Latin Churches," *Church History* 24, no. 4 (December 1, 1955): 324-346.

his own belief that the mission would succeed so long as Eliano and Sasso followed his advice. After all, who knew better than he? Of course, as it turned out, he was wrong.

Because he thought he knew what was best for the mission, Santa Severina did something that Carafa never would have considered. Rather than giving instructions to the Jesuits and backing away from the mission, Santa Severina continually dispatched to Egypt letter after letter containing exacting directions for how the mission was to be organized and conducted. Over the course of the mission, from its original organization until its final conclusion in the summer of 1585, Santa Severina wrote over twenty lengthy letters of instruction to Egypt, and even some to Eliano in 1582 while he was still in the Levant working with the Maronites. By contrast, over the course of the mission to the Maronites, which lasted two years longer than the mission to Egypt, Carafa wrote only six. The style of these letters demonstrates that Santa Severina had a clear understanding for how converting the Copts would happen. In a verbose, five-page letter sent to Cairo in June 1583, Santa Severina implored Eliano to hold fast and continue following his orders, despite “the hardness of [the Copts’] spirit and the antiquity of their abuses and errors.” He then explained that if Eliano only continued his work, then surely he would find them “more manageable and inclined to accept what was proposed to them concerning Catholic truth.”<sup>62</sup> And later in this same letter, Santa Severina again talked about showing the Copts Catholic truth. After ordering Eliano to make a list of all the Copts’ errors “in order to be able to refute them in time,” he praised Eliano’s efforts to write an Arabic catechism and an Arabic translation of the Vulgate in order that, he quipped, “they can accept

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<sup>62</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I. f. 119r./MPOIV.115-116. “Et quanto alla prima, sebene nel suo arrivo ha trovato difficoltà di poter fare qualche frutto nella natione de’ Cophti per la durezza degli animi loro, invecchiati negli abusi et errori, non si ha però da perder d’animo così subito, ma aspettare che col tempo si vadino evacuando pian piano i mali humori, et non lasciar’ intanto di farne ogni possibil diligenza. E tanto più ch’ella stessa dice poi con l’ultima sua che, dopo essersi abboccata alcune altre volte col patriarca et con altri suoi più intelligenti, gli va trovando più trattabili et facili in accettare quel ch’è stato loro proposto circa la verità cattolica.”

and have some light of Catholic truth.” He believed that this truth would free a people that “for centuries [were] immersed in errors and the shadows of heresies, and [were] living among infidels.”<sup>63</sup> In the rest of the letter, Santa Severina stressed that Eliano move the mission forward and not back down.

And by January 1584, with the synod in full swing, Santa Severina remained aggressive. Then Santa Severina, unwilling to change his methods as the mission shifted, became increasingly angry. Even though the synod at least suggested the possibility that the Copts were ready to submit to Roman authority, Santa Severina was growing increasingly disillusioned with Eastern and Oriental Christian clerics. Despite his desire to make the mission work, he simply did not grasp how the varied Churches of the Christian Orient co-existed and how this impacted the Copts. First on Santa Severina’s list of diffident clerics was Patriarch John. Santa Severina was irritated that John and his representatives claimed to have never received letters from himself and Gregory.<sup>64</sup> But more importantly, non Coptic prelates seemed to be causing a major problem for the mission. The biggest opponent of the Jesuits’ efforts was Ignatius David II Shah, the Jacobite patriarch. It appeared that he was attempting via any means necessary to unsettle the bonds between Eliano and the Copts. Santa Severina lamented that he could not fathom why the Copts would listen to this cleric. After all, he was nothing but a heretic. But Santa Severina forgot that the “heresy” that defined the Jacobites was the same one that defined the Copts: the rejection of the Council of Chalcedon. The Copts and Jacobites were autocephalous, not

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<sup>63</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I. f. 120r./MPOIV.117. “In questo mezzo ella fa bene a notare gli errori di quella nazione per poterli a suo tempo confutare. Et lodo che facci copiare in lettera Arabica il Catechismo stampate in carattere caldeo perché lo possano intendere et haver qualche luce della verità cattolica, né si curi che per ora sia oppugnata, perché si guadagna con l’insegnarla et predicarla; et non è gran cosa per ritrovarsi immersi in errori et in tenebre d’heresie per tanti secoli, et poi fra infideli. Et similmente lodo assai che facci copiar libri della Sacra Scrittura in lingua Arabica per l’effetto che scrive di haver diversi esemplari, et conferirli poi con la Bibla nostra et editione Vulgata, et con l’hebraea et greca, et stamparli in arabico.”

<sup>64</sup> As we learned in Chapter Three, these letters in fact did not reach John, as they were intercepted, most likely by associates of Ignatius Na’matallah.

autonomous, sects; David and John were spiritual brothers, not opposing heads of competing faiths. Somehow the cardinal protector missed this. Likewise, the Greeks' ecclesiological views troubled Santa Severina. He lambasted the Greek Patriarchs of Alexandria and Constantinople, unable to grasp why the Patriarch of Alexandria would only consider union should the Patriarch of Constantinople do so. But, of course, that was never going to happen. Here again, Santa Severina did not see that the various Greek churches were in fact not independent churches at all, but rather a complex web of loosely interconnected churches in communion with one another, with the Patriarch of Constantinople seen as *primus inter pares*.<sup>65</sup> For someone who had dedicated his life to working with Oriental Christians, Santa Severina never mastered these nuances. Rather, his Catholic ecclesiological views and the deep religious divisions of Europe that partly resulted from it, prevented him from realizing that Eastern and Oriental ecclesiology was horizontal, not vertical. In no church did a patriarch possess the same power in matters of the faith as did the pope for Catholicism. And missing this very basic but direly essential bit of information plagued Santa Severina throughout his career.

This was most apparent when, after John refused to sign the synod that would have resulted in Coptic-Catholic accord, Santa Severina did not give in, explaining that "His Holiness has resolved and ordained that your Reverences not leave," as Gregory and Santa Severina refused to admit that Coptic union was lost.<sup>66</sup> And then the news came that Santa Severina, always staunch in his theological views, rejected the synodal decree that lacked Patriarch John's signature. While it was a step in the right direction, it just was not Catholic enough. And it was at just about this time, when the synod was rejected, that the feud between Mariani and Vento began, sealing the mission's fate. Santa Severina did his best to free Eliano, and hoped the

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<sup>65</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 157r-160v./MPOIV.181-183.

<sup>66</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 191r./MPOIV.254-255.



mission could continue, somehow. But within months of Eliano's release from prison, the pope was dead, and so was the mission. The last letter we have from Santa Severina that was dispatched to Egypt is dated 10 May 1585, exactly one month after Gregory's death. It is a different letter. It lacks the bravado and confidence of his prior letters. Santa Severina seems frustrated, preoccupied, even inconsolable. He explained to Eliano that he desired to write to him to give him some instructions about possibly continuing, but he was not able to do so. The new pope, Sixtus V, seemed disinterested in hearing about an expensive mission that went nowhere.<sup>67</sup> Two days later, Acquaviva wrote to tell Eliano it was time to come home. But he never received that letter; he left before it ever arrived.

It is impossible to say that Santa Severina's methods for the mission were why it actually failed. After all, it was not the cardinal protector's fault that Eliano and his companions ended up in an Ottoman prison; in fact, he was essential in freeing them. And most likely, the Copts would have resisted no matter what, even if Santa Severina's methods mirrored Carafa's. But Santa Severina's methods certainly did not help. Carafa molded his mission to the needs of the Maronites; Santa Severina tried to Catholicize the Copts through hard reform. His stubbornness and cluelessness were apparent in all aspects of the mission. Perhaps the best example of this occurred in September 1583. Eliano noticed that many Coptic churches were ill-equipped for liturgical ceremonies, so he requested from Santa Severina one-hundred chalices to be sent to Egypt. But when they arrived, Eliano recognized right away that they were too small.<sup>68</sup> Santa

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<sup>67</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 I*, f. 294r./MPOIV.372. "Et per le molte et varie occupatione che sono seguite poi, non ho potuto rispondere poichè, per scriverle risolutamente sopra il continuare o non in cotesta missione, conviene trattarne con Sua Beatitudine. Di che non si è havuta comodità in questo principio per il cumulo de' negocij et per le mole occupationi che vi sono state et sin' hora vi sono."

<sup>68</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II*, f. 129r./MPOIV.138. "Il Padre Sasso ha portato seco 100 calici per li Cofiti. Quali, per non esser secondo di quella forma mandata di qua, non hanno piaciuti, per esser piccoli. Se paresse alla Paternità Vostra di fare coll' Illustrissimo Cardinale sene facesse far almeno 50 di quella forma che portò seco M. Mariani che doveva haver mandato al Signor Regolo in Venetia, acciò li facesse far così, saria molto bene."

Severina never bothered to learn even the most fundamental things about the Coptic Church, like what kind of chalices they used. Eliano feared that even a small misstep like this would upset the Copts, as he knew that they would never use “Roman” vessels. The affront to Coptic liturgical identity was not taken lightly. And even though the matter was rectified right away (Eliano requested that Acquaviva send at least an additional fifty chalices crafted to the specifications mandated before), it says something about Santa Severina and his views of the Copts. They were, until they submitted, schismatic heretics not worthy of making decisions for themselves about how to practice their own faith. And Eliano knew full well that that approach would never work. But exactly what did cause Santa Severina to be such a hard liner and so obstinate in his approach to the Copts? Surely part of it was his stubbornness and overconfidence in his understanding of the Near East. But there was one other problem for Santa Severina that caused him to put too much pressure on the Jesuits sent to the Copts: Ignatius Na’matallah, Patriarch of the Jacobites.

### **Flirtations with the Jacobites: Gregory and Ignatius Na’matallah**

Throughout his papacy, Gregory saw union with the Christian Orient as a necessary way to safeguard the Church and strengthen it in the face of its enemies. Additionally, achieving union with the non-Chalcedonian Christians would make Gregory without doubt one of the most successful defenders and promoters of the faith ever to sit on the throne of Peter. The key was to find a strong Oriental cleric who could make the union seem more palatable to the Oriental Churches. And Gregory believed he had found that man. At the same time that the Jesuits were carrying out their missions to the Maronites and the Copts, at Rome under the protection of Gregory XIII resided a Jacobite cleric who desired to help forge a lasting union between Rome

and the Oriental Churches, Ignatius Na'matallah, Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch. Na'matallah was elected patriarch in 1557 and served the Jacobite community of Syria for twenty years. Beginning in 1561, he had made overtures to Rome in hopes for a real union between Jacobites and Catholics. In 1578, when he arrived in Rome, he immediately sought out Gregory and Santa Severina to formulate a submission, claiming that, as the Jacobite patriarch, he and all the Jacobites were ready to submit. But he left out one important part: he was no longer the Patriarch of the Jacobites, a bit of information that was fundamental when it came to furnishing a real union with Rome. Na'matallah was deposed because not all Jacobites were too keen on his sympathies with Rome. And rumors spread that Na'matallah himself was Catholic. To make matters only worse, he was accused of converting to Islam and then recanting; and it appeared that he had. And so, in 1577, Na'matallah was deposed in favor of his nephew, Dawud II Shah, the man the Santa Severina feared would upset Rome's relations with the Copts. In the end, no matter his intentions, Na'matallah was, from the beginning, a dissimulator pretending to be what he certainly was not.<sup>69</sup> And Santa Severina never did trust the Jacobite cleric. Even as late as 1583, Santa Severina still believed that he was a deceiver who had only come to Rome to curry favor with Gregory. And when it was discovered that he had been deposed, he was only further incensed with him. There was also the widely held belief that Na'matallah, self-interested as he was, was secretly communicating with the Copts in order to put himself at the center of any union with Rome.<sup>70</sup> But none of this ever seemed to bother Gregory, who grew quite fond of Na'matallah.

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<sup>69</sup> Giorgio Levi della Vida, "Il soggiorno a Roma del patriarca siro Ignazio Na'matallah," in *Documenti intorno alle relazioni delle chiese orientali con la S. Sede durante il pontificato di Gregorio XIII* (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1948), 10 (hereafter *Documenti intorno*)

<sup>70</sup> ARSI, *Gall 95 II*, f. 169r./MPOIV.119. "Per dechiaratione di quello che nella lettera da mi si cenna, che in Roma potrebbe deviare quei che venissero mandati dal patriarca de' Cophti a questa Santa Sede, Vostra Reverentia, come credo, ha inteso, che sia il patriarca d'Antiochia, il quale come quel che non procede sinceramente

Despite issues surrounding his actual status, Na'matallah was in fact eager to foster bonds with Rome; and he used his skills as an astronomer and mathematician to assist in the formulation of the new calendar that bears Gregory's name. Furthermore, many within the curia respected Na'matallah immensely. Giovanni Grimani, Patriarch of Aquileia, wrote to Rome in November 1577 to praise Na'matallah, believing that the patriarch was a great prelate and a staunch defender of the faith; he was also happy to relate that Na'matallah was well disposed toward union and submission to Gregory's authority.<sup>71</sup> And Na'matallah himself immediately showed himself ready to do whatever was necessary, including letting Catholic theologians vet Jacobite texts to amend and correct them. He even asked Santa Severina directly to appoint four theologians for this purpose; he asked for Jesuits in particular, knowing full well their reputation for theological precision.<sup>72</sup> Gregory was truly convinced that the Jacobites would submit because of Na'matallah, and that getting the community to go along was not as difficult as many thought. Gregory held the churches in high regard and felt that the Jacobites' heresies were not heresies in practice, but were intellectual ones that were easily eradicated with a reform of the mind; reform of practice would come once the theologies were correct. Many in Rome believed that part of this was the Turks, who prevented communities like the Jacobites from achieving the great theological levels in Rome. Of course, even though centuries of Syriac theology proved otherwise, this view suggested that the Jacobites were theologically vapid, unable to contemplate the mysteries of the faith. And so, it would be Rome that would show the way theologically, with Gregory as the champion of true belief. This would take place in four easy steps. First, the

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ma con inganni et simulationi et bugie, per quell ch'io ho trovato, sebene Nostro Signore mosra non crederlo, né volerlo sapere, et com'ella dopo il suo ritorno ha sempre scritto, non tratta da doverlo né con verità, ma per interessi e disegni suoi, l'union della sua Natione.

<sup>71</sup> BAV, *Vat. Lat.* 6192, f. 688./*Documenti intorno*, 45.

<sup>72</sup> Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, *Sezione Magliabechiana*, Ms. Magl., Classe CXXXVII, cod. 131 f. 54./*Documenti intorno*, 46-47.

Jacobites, like all Christians in the Near East, needed to be reminded of their submission to Rome at the Council of Florence. Second, the curia would exhort them to send their brightest youths to Rome to be trained in order that “they be able to be very useful to their nations” as “they will be instructed well and cared for as our own sons.” Third, to counter any resistance, Catholic merchants in the area would work with them and promote harmony and establish trust between Rome and the Jacobites. Lastly, there would need to be a system for printing approved books in Arabic, Syriac, Armenian, and Ethiopian, and a method to have merchants distribute them to the communities. These works should include bibles, catechisms, the decrees of the Council of Trent, and memoranda of the union of Greeks, Armenians, and Jacobites made at the Council of Florence. Of course all of this would be expensive; and so, in order for this to work, the papacy would have to fund the entire project.<sup>73</sup>

But Gregory continued to believe that Na’matallah was the key to all this. The problem was that Na’matallah’s status in Syria remained vague. Because his nephew Dawud was also calling himself patriarch, it was unclear why Na’matallah was no longer the official patriarch. However, lest he alienate the Jacobite communities, Gregory maintained a correspondence with Dawud that centered on stressing his desire to obtain Jacobite acknowledgement of Roman authority. In a brief to Dawud written in April 1579, Gregory implored him to see the importance of submission to Rome and, in very flowery and fraternal language, praised Dawud for his dedication to finding the best means for uniting the two churches. But because of the delicate situation surrounding Na’matallah’s status, Gregory made sure not to offend or disillusion Dawud. When discussing Na’matallah’s presence in Rome, Gregory referred to him as Dawud’s antecessor without denying his status as a patriarch; Gregory knew full well that both men would

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<sup>73</sup> ASV, *LXIV* 34, f. 126r-127v./*Documenti intorno*, 48-49.

be necessary in his effort to win the Jacobites for Rome.<sup>74</sup> And Na'matallah, knowing Santa Severina's suspicions, tried to convince Santa Severina that he was serious about union with Rome. Na'matallah told Santa Severina that union was his principal reason for coming, and then reminded Santa Severina that he had attempted to achieve it several times over the previous two decades, but the efforts had failed. Often the difficulty of finding passage to Europe from the Ottoman Empire was the problem; the late 1560s and early 1570s were particularly challenging, especially during the War of Cyprus, culminating in the Battle of Lepanto. The problem was, he swore, that the clerics he sent to Rome had terrible luck. One of his agents died of the plague in Constantinople before being able to make it to Rome. And in 1565, during a brief stay in Alexandria before setting off for Europe, Na'matallah's vicar, John, apparently decided to have a light swim in the Nile. But so did the crocodile that ate him.<sup>75</sup>

By 1580, doubts surrounding Na'matallah's status began to fade away, and his standing in Syria appeared to be better than it had been three years prior. This, along with new developments, also meant that Gregory had many reasons to think that union with the Jacobites was within his grasp. In addition to Na'matallah's cooperation in Rome, Gregory also believed that the patriarch in Syria was well disposed toward union under the authority of the Catholic Church. Dawud, now firmly accepted in Rome as the patriarch the Jacobites recognized, wrote to Gregory a quite lengthy report of his own desire to submit to Rome, something Gregory had longed for since his ascent to the papacy in 1572. Referring to Gregory as "the father of universal Christianity, father of all priests, father of kings and emperors, father of the great Roman cardinals, father of all the patriarchs and archbishops," Dawud humbled himself and longed to

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<sup>74</sup> ASV, *Sec. Brev.* 45, f. 281./*Documenti intorno*, 50-51. "Cum superioribus mensibus Venerabilis frater Naam (Na'matallah appellatus *canc.*) Patriarca fraternitatis tuae antecessor, et secundum carnem germanus frater in hanc almam Urbem Romam ad Nos et sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli limini pervenisset..."

<sup>75</sup> ASV, *LXIV* 34, f. 130/*Documenti intorno*, 51-52.

submit to the antiquity of Gregory's authority out of his love for him as well as his obedience to the see of Peter. He wished to kiss the feet of the pontiff in hopes that it would remove the stain of his wretchedness. Dawud then acknowledged the accord struck at Florence and wished to renew that union, as he saw Gregory as the "head and the more venerable and greater and higher and older and more preeminent prince among us."<sup>76</sup> The positioning of Gregory as a father rather than as a brother was a major step toward union, Gregory thought. But the question would be if all the Jacobites would agree, something more difficult to obtain.

On the surface of things, it did not appear that it would be an issue. This was evident when Dawud and the Jacobite metropolitans wrote to the college of cardinals. The same supplications were present as in Dawud's letter to Gregory, and their view concerning Na'matallah was surprisingly positive. Given that just three years prior, they had deposed him in favor of his nephew for his apparent pro-Roman leanings, the metropolitans nevertheless showered their former patriarch with praise, referring to him as "our father and master" and "head of our faith." The metropolitans also explained that through a synod, concord with Rome was to be established. They then explained that Peter was the prince of the apostles and that, as his successor, the pope was head of all Christians. The Jacobites wished to praise and exalt Gregory, and they favored and longed for "this concord and faith in the Church of God that is greater than all Christian nations." The result was clear: the overwhelming majority of the Jacobite hierarchy was in favor of acknowledging Roman authority; submission to Rome was within Gregory's grasp.<sup>77</sup>

The metropolitans further demonstrated their desire for accord when they sent to Rome an official announcement that Dawud was their patriarch and that they wished for Roman

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<sup>76</sup> ASV, *Fondo Borghese ser. I t.8*, f. 56r-82v./*Documenti interno*, 54-66.

<sup>77</sup> ASV, *Fondo Borghese, ser. I t.8*, f. 83r-90v./*Documenti interno*, 78-84.

approval. Containing the names of twelve Jacobite patriarchs, the announcement seemed to demonstrate a concerted effort toward unity. If the Jacobites were to come under Roman authority, the selection of a new patriarch would have to be announced to Rome.<sup>78</sup> But this would simply be seen an exercise in ecumenism and not necessarily full submission. The problem was that at the same time the Maronites wanted Roman approval of their appointment of their newly-elected patriarch, Sarkis. So, if Gregory took this notice the same way he took the one from the Maronites, it would appear that the Jacobites were actually beginning to follow a specifically Roman ecclesiological protocol. It is, however, also possible that this was nothing more than a show of good faith on the part of the Jacobites, who hoped to demonstrate fidelity and fraternity and nothing more. They did show obsequiousness toward Gregory, who was seen as the preeminent leader of the church, but levels of sincerity are ambiguous. The problem was that this letter was couched in the language of union, but not necessarily submission. Therefore, while there was a recognition of Gregory as a spiritual father, it is not entirely clear that they were admitting to papal primacy rather than a form of *primus inter pares*. But in the end, it does remain clear that the Jacobites desperately wanted Roman acknowledgement of the ascent of Dawud as patriarch.

And for his part, Na'matallah seemed to have accepted that he was unseated and that his nephew was the true Jacobite patriarch. He likewise explained that the Jacobites had always been well disposed toward Rome. As Peter had also founded their see, there was a filial bond between Antioch and Rome, albeit with Rome having senior status in the relationship. But the Turks and other Christians, mainly the Greeks, had pressured the Jacobites, thus alienating them from

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<sup>78</sup> ASV, *Fondo Borghese ser. I t. 40*, f. 128r-132v./*Documenti interno*, 88-90.



everyone and making true union with Rome only a dream.<sup>79</sup> And he continued to show humility toward Gregory, as he explained that not only did he wish to kiss Gregory's feet, but also that all the nations of the Christian Orient do the same.<sup>80</sup> And a step in the right direction came on 25 April 1581, when the congregation that Gregory had appointed officially confirmed Dawud as patriarch. It appeared that Gregory had positioned himself well. By 1581, Gregory had achieved nearly all he had hoped for concerning the Christian Orient. The Maronite mission was finally going well. Santa Severina was also beginning to plan a mission to the Copts. And now, the Jacobites appeared to be on the verge of becoming Catholic. And if the Jacobites and Copts submitted, then the Armenians, the third anti-Chalcedonian sect, might well follow suit. That would have meant that only the Greeks would have been outside of a true ecumenical church with Rome as its head. But by 1583, hopes for Jacobite submission were lost; union faded away, despite Dawud, Na'matallah, and the metropolitans' obvious desires for it.

What went wrong? Two things: first was the problem of the position of the Greeks, a group never kind to the Jacobites because of their Christological views; second was the major ecclesiological differences between the Christian Orient and Rome. And these two separate issues collided when Gregory acknowledged Dawud as the legitimate patriarch. The title Rome gave to Dawud was Antiochian Patriarch of the Nation of the Jacobites, rather than simply Patriarch of Antioch. It was seen as belittling and insulting, and it stung with Greek favoritism. But Gregory and Santa Severina believed they had no other choice. The problem was that Gregory feared that giving the title Patriarch of Antioch to Dawud would disillusion the Greek Patriarch of Antioch, whose cooperation was necessary, as he held significant sway over the

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<sup>79</sup> BAV, *Urb. Lat.* 832 f. 502r-509v./*Documenti intorno*, 93-95.

<sup>80</sup> Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, *Sezione Magliabechiana*, Ms. Magl. Class CXXXVII cod. 131 f.52r-53v./*Documenti intorno*, 92-93.

Greek merchant community of the Levant. Also, the Maronite patriarch, Sarkis, had just been confirmed as the Patriarch of Antioch; and that the Maronite patriarch held that title always enraged the Jacobites.<sup>81</sup> But Gregory believed that the title was a compromise upon which all parties could agree. Gregory and the curia acknowledged the importance of Antioch for the Jacobites and confirmed that Dawud was indeed the patriarch. What else did the Jacobites want? But the term Jacobite was what *others* called them; *they* were repulsed by it. Somehow, Gregory and Santa Severina missed this. It is unclear how this occurred since that Gregory and the curia had been warned that this title would never be accepted. And that warning came from none other than Na'matallah. In a letter to Gregory, he referred to himself as the Patriarch of Antioch, leaving out any mention of being a Jacobite. He told Gregory that bending to the wishes of the Greeks would anger the Syrians, as it was they, not the Greeks, who were loyal to Rome. Thus, their patriarch deserved the title Patriarch of Antioch. The point was clear: the Jacobite patriarch held the title Patriarch of Antioch. While they were looking for papal acknowledgement of this, the question of who held Antioch was never up for debate. It was theirs. Na'matallah explained quite forcefully:

And first may Your Benevolence know that this Greek, who calls himself Patriarch of Antioch but is not in Antioch, holds neither a church nor the people that belong to the Patriarchate of Antioch, nor any church of Christians, nor any Christianity, but resides in Damascus and has under his jurisdiction a few Greeks, who reside in the city of Damascus. And it is already known that this city belongs to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, not Antioch, and so he is known as Patriarch of Antioch without possessing the city, the people, or any church, that belongs to the Patriarchate of Antioch.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> ASV, *A.A. I-XVIII*, 1775./*Documenti intorno*, 95-96.

<sup>82</sup> ASV, *A.A. I-XVIII* 1774, f. 2./*Documenti intorno*, 98-100. “Et prima la B.<sup>ne</sup> V. saprà che questo Greco, qual si fa chiamare Patriarca d’Antiochia, non ha, ne Chiesa, ne populi, quali appartengano al Patriarchato d’Antiochia, non essendo in Antiochia hoggi, ne Chiesa alcuna di Christiani, ne Christianismo alcuno, ma resiede in Damasco et ha sotto di se al suo governo alcuni pochi Greci, quali stanno nella detta Città di Damasco et gia si sa che questa Città appartiene al Patriarchato di Hierusalem, et non di Antiochia, et cosi lui si fa chiamare Patriarcha d’Antiochia senza possedere, ne Città, ne Pupoli, ne Chiesa alcuna, che appartenghi al Patriarchato d’Antiochia.”

In short, there could only be one Patriarch of Antioch, and that was his nephew. Altering the title of the patriarch limited his jurisdiction and undermined his authority. Not to mention, it was culturally insulting. Furthermore, the term “Jacobite” was a Greek invention, and only entered into common parlance because of Greek dominance in the Christian Orient. If, Na’matallah implored, Gregory truly loved the Syrians and held them in high esteem, he would accept the title “Patriarch of Antioch” and abhor the use of Jacobite at all costs.

And so what did Rome eventually do? In the reports written in Rome, the modifications to Dawud’s title remained; in the official confirmation of Dawud as Patriarch, approved by Santa Severina, they clearly ignored Na’matallah’s warnings, using “Syrian” and “Jacobite” two times each.<sup>83</sup> But when Santa Severina communicated the confirmation of Dawud’s election, he left out any mention of Dawud being the patriarch of the Jacobites, referring to him solely as Antiochian Patriarch.<sup>84</sup> However, it took quite a long time to get this news to Dawud. By October 1582, he had still not heard whether or not he had been confirmed by Gregory. The letter began with a long exhortation on the papacy and on Gregory himself. But after that, the letter changes tone. The rest of the letter exhibits the Patriarch’s candor concerning the poor situation of the Jacobites. Dawud explained that they were in a quite doleful state because they constantly faced painful mockery from the various groups in Syria, mainly the Turks and the Greeks. Dawud hoped that union with Rome and the recognition of his patriarchate by Gregory would alleviate the horrendous situation that the Jacobites faced.<sup>85</sup> It was only in February 1583, that Gregory and Santa Severina wrote to Leonardo Abel, Archbishop of Sidon and papal nuncio

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<sup>83</sup> ASV, *Arch. Consistor. Act. Miscell.* 47, f. 310rv./*Documenti intorno*, 101.

<sup>84</sup> Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, *Sezione Magliabechiana*, Ms. Magl. Class CXXXVII cod. 131 f.57rv./*Documenti intorno*, 102.

<sup>85</sup> Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, *Sezione Magliabechiana*, Ms. Magl. Class CXXXVII cod. 131 f.75r-81v./*Documenti intorno*, 103-111.

to the Christian Orient, to inform him that Dawud was to be notified that Rome recognized his election and confirmed him as Patriarch of Antioch. Any mention of him being the patriarch of solely the Jacobites was left out.<sup>86</sup>

It seemed that nuances in titles had not upset the possibility of union; finally the Jacobites were fully ready to submit to Roman authority. But Gregory and Santa Severina forgot that the Jacobites would never unite with Rome so long as their spiritual brothers, the Copts, maintained their anti-Roman stance. It was Dawud's brother, Yusuf, who explained that union with Rome could only occur if the Copts and Ethiopians agreed to it. This would have baffled Gregory and Santa Severina, and it surely frustrated Santa Severina when it was discovered that Na'matallah kept up a steady correspondence with John XIV. From the Roman perspective, all the sects of the Christian Orient operated independently from one another. While indeed, the Copts, Jacobites, and Armenians were in some sort of theological communion, the idea that Catholic conversion of one sect could be refused by the patriarch of another was incomprehensible. But Gregory and Santa Severina, operating in a world of vertical ecclesiology, with the pope sitting above all the patriarchs, could not grasp how the horizontal ecclesiology of the Christian Orient worked. Dawud, for his part, could not in good conscience submit to Rome against the wishes of John XIV or the Armenian Patriarch Antreas Merdeentzee and his successor in 1583, David Merdeentzee. And as the mission with the Copts was only just getting under way, and then crumbled within eighteen months, the Copts continued to reject Rome for their own reasons. Therefore, the Jacobites too never submitted to Roman authority, settling only with Gregory's recognition of Dawud's election as Patriarch of Antioch.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> ASV, *Sec. Brev.* 56, f. 160rv./*Documenti intorno*, 111-112.

<sup>87</sup> Giorgio Levi della Vida, "Il soggiorno a Roma del patriarca siro Ignazio Na'matallah," in *Documenti intorno*, 35-36. A good elaboration of the relationship between the Armenians and Jacobites as well as how the

This give and take between maintaining independence between autocephalous churches (as both the Copts and Jacobites were and still are) was not solely a matter of faith. It had as much to do with the world in which they found themselves. Much of this is political, as unity among the Oriental churches demonstrates a sense of solidarity in the face of Ottoman authority and papal intervention that is often overlooked. While in theory Rome could have helped the Jacobites, the Copts (and many Jacobites and Armenians as well), believed that Roman intervention in the affairs of the Oriental Churches would do more harm than good. It is true that the Ottomans implemented the millet system and, legally speaking, viewed all Christians as “Christians” with little differentiation, lumping them together with other non Muslims under the category of *dhimmi*, or religious minorities. But it would be foolish to think that the Ottomans were unaware of the confessional politics of their provinces, and of the potential influence the papacy could have in Egypt and Syria. After all, they were arguably the two most important provinces of the Empire, and the Ottomans surely would not want the papacy, especially as pro-Hapsburg as it was, to have any sway over the Christian populations of their major trade centers, Alexandria and Aleppo.<sup>88</sup> In the end, union never came. When it was clear that neither the Copts nor the Armenians were ready to subject themselves to Roman authority, Dawud backed off. Surely this infuriated Gregory and Santa Severina, leading to speculation that perhaps Na‘matallah, jealous of his nephew and upset that he could not achieve union with Rome on his own, had potentially sabotaged the mission to the Copts. It does appear that Na‘matallah was frustrated that he did not have a more active role in securing union with Rome. He always

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Oriental Churches were interrelated can be found in Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 128-134; and again with the Copts, pp. 149-150.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 30-33. For more on the millet system and how Christians were classified under Ottoman law, cf. Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World*, 61-65. For the developments in Aleppo concerning national identities and the problems the Ottomans faced concerning ethnic minorities, cf. Bruce Masters, “Trading Diasporas and ‘Nations’: The Genesis of National Identities in Ottoman Aleppo,” *The International History Review* 9, no. 3 (1987): 345-367.

remained self-serving in this regard. But it remains unclear what effect he had on the Copts; most likely they never desired union for their own reasons.

So how did all of this affect the Jesuits in Egypt? The problem was that Santa Severina put more pressure on Eliano to work with the Copts because he believed that Na'matallah was surely sabotaging the mission. Because Na'matallah told Gregory and Santa Severina that "Jacobites and the Copts are friends together and are like brothers, and particularly with the [Jacobite] patriarch, who says insomuch that his nation must wait for the result of the mission and the resolution of the Copts," this meant that Eliano and Bruno were working not just for saving the Copts' souls, but those of the Jacobites as well without ever interacting with the Jacobites.<sup>89</sup> But more than that, Santa Severina's repeated insistence that he did not trust Na'matallah and that he felt he was undermining the mission to the Copts all along, coupled with Coptic resistance, put Eliano in the difficult position of having to fight against, or so he thought, both the Copts' own intransigence and possible double-agency by Na'matallah.<sup>90</sup> By August 1584, Santa Severina was convinced that Na'matallah was duplicitous and was lying about the nature of his correspondence with John. He told Eliano that he was working diligently to prove to other cardinals and to Gregory that Na'matallah was lying and was not trustworthy; he furthered this by telling Eliano not to trust the deposed patriarch and to be very suspicious of any help he might offer. He also ordered Eliano to investigate exactly what Na'matallah was up to, taking Eliano's focus away from the mission.<sup>91</sup> And so, the Coptic mission and its direction were divided, all because Santa Severina disliked Na'matallah. But Gregory admired him and believed he was a true Catholic.

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<sup>89</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 144v./MPOIV.155. "i Jacobiti et i Cophti sono amici insieme et come fratelli et particolarmente cotesto Patriarca, talmente che dice circa la sua natione doverasi aspettar l'essito di cotesta missione et risolutione de' Cophti."

<sup>90</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I f. 201r-202v./MPOIV.265-267.

<sup>91</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 207r/MPOIV.276; ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 210rv.

And Gregory seems to have been right. In one letter to John XIV, Na'matallah had great praise for Gregory and explained that he was most friendly to all true Christians. Furthermore, Na'matallah suggested that union with Rome would benefit the Copts, as it would help strengthen the bonds between the Copts and Jacobites, who were ready to submit if the Copts were.<sup>92</sup> All along it had been John telling Na'matallah that he had no interest in submitting to the man he referred to simply as the patriarch of Rome; it appears Na'matallah was helping the Jesuits' efforts, not interfering with them.<sup>93</sup> But all that mattered very little. By the time that might have been realized, the mission was long over and Eliano was back in Europe. But what did matter was how much Santa Severina's desire to unite the Jacobites with Rome actually served to problematize the Jesuits' efforts with the Copts. Santa Severina's fear of Na'matallah made him believe that the Jacobite cleric was solely using Coptic diffidence as an excuse to prevent union with Rome; and Na'matallah was subsequently feeding that very diffidence by writing to John that Gregory and the Jesuits could not be trusted. But neither appears to be true. Coptic diffidence bothered Na'matallah, and he was writing to John to implore him to reconsider his stance.

In the end, Na'matallah seems to have been on Rome's side, at least as far as it served him. He was, according to Gregory, the perfect man to coordinate a Coptic-Jacobite-Catholic union. And to a certain extent Gregory was right. Despite being deposed, within three years he had convinced his nephew Dawud to acknowledge Roman primacy. And at least some of his letters to John and the Copts suggest that he believed that union was the best move. But Gregory and Santa Severina forgot to consider one factor that always prevented the Copts from uniting with Rome: the Copts themselves. And Santa Severina, for his part, mistook Na'matallah's

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<sup>92</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f. 209r./MPOIV.278-279.

<sup>93</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 I, f.93r-94v./MPOIV.168-169.

actions as nothing more than the machinations of a duplicitous cleric who found himself in Rome looking for a safe haven from his political enemies. Even if Na'matallah had tried to undermine the mission, he would have only been telling the Copts what they already believed: that Gregory was nothing more than the Bishop of Rome.

## **Conclusions**

When looked at individually, even myopically, the first three missions to the Christian Orient each had their own distinct issues. In the first mission to the Copts, Coptic resistance coupled with preoccupations concerning Eliano's Jewish past prevented Eliano and Rodríguez from securing Coptic union. And when the Jesuits returned to Egypt in 1582, again Coptic resistance plagued the mission, along with a political situation that the Jesuits were ill-equipped to handle. Even in the Maronite mission, which was by far the most successful of the three, issues with illiteracy and external influences from the Ottomans problematized how the Jesuits attempted to Latinize the Maronites. But if we take a step back and look at what connected the missions, the respective problems each mission faced were only a part of the larger difficulty found in the effort to make early modern Catholicism the first truly global faith.

The Jesuits were forced to maneuver themselves according to local customs and religious traditions. As much as they would have liked to strong-arm the Copts or Maronites into complete Latinization, they knew, just as they did on any mission, that such tactics would result in their being cast out faster than they could communicate with Rome what the next step in the mission should be. And this was true of any mission, whether it was in Cairo, Goa, or Naples. Eliano, Rodríguez, and others (but not all Jesuits, e.g. Raggio) recognized that their work in the Christian Orient was as much dependent upon the Christian communities' desires to work with them as it



was on their own belief in the truth of Catholic doctrine. For this reason, they knew they needed to find a middle ground, a place where Catholic ideals and Near Eastern Christian realities could blend to create a type of Catholicism that pleased both Rome and the Christian Orient.

But there was another problem: with the exception of the Maronites, the two groups that sandwiched the Jesuits in their efforts, the papacy and the Christian Orient, were far too intransigent in their respective views. Popes like Pius IV and Gregory XIII would never accept anything less than full, unequivocal submission to Roman authority. And they, along with men like Santa Severina, never fully grasped that this, rather than communion with Rome as *primus inter pares*, was unrealistic. And that was because the Copts and Jacobites had a very clear understanding of how the Church should be structured as well as exactly what was considered sound doctrine. And as long as they were horizontal ecclesiasts who rejected Chalcedon (two points from which they never budged), they would always reject Roman efforts for union (read: submission).

But there was also the element of mistrust that came up all along the way. Santa Severina micromanaged the second mission to the Copts, in part because he never fully believed Eliano and Sasso could handle the mission without him. And many at Rome, Santa Severina and Mercurian included, never trusted Ignatius Na'matallah. He would always be the duplicitous Jacobite cleric who both sought to sabotage and help Rome, depending on which end benefitted him at any give time. And the Copts and Jacobites never trusted Rome or the Jesuits; while the Jesuits claimed to desire to save souls, letters from Rome said the Jesuits had other goals in mind. And least trusting of all were the Ottoman officials. Any inkling that the power balance between the minority sects was offset in any way resulted in swift action, including imprisonment, something the Jesuits knew about all too well.

So where did that leave the Jesuits? For one, it left them in a difficult position moving forward. Because they continued to rely on the papacy or a particular monarchy to fund their missions, they were always in some sense at the mercy of their patrons.<sup>94</sup> And in the case of the Ottoman Empire, just as anywhere, that meant adapting their superiors' goals to political and cultural realities. As the Society grew in size and influence, the popes continued to see Jesuits as an important means to secure union with the Christian Orient. But if they were to succeed, they would have to work with, not dictate to, those whom they wished to Catholicize. They were thus forced to negotiate these two religio-cultural poles. And finding a medium between pleasing or appeasing Rome and demonstrating to the Christians of the Ottoman Empire that they legitimately cared for their spiritual wellbeing continued to be a major sticking point throughout the rest of the sixteenth and into the seventeenth century. And doing all this while not angering Ottoman authorities was just one more wrinkle in the complex project of ending a millennium-old schism.

But rather than sit back and let Rome dictate how the Jesuits would proceed, or passively accept that the Christian Orient was just far too foreign, the Jesuits attempted to find that elusive happy medium. They believed that there could be a way for Rome's goals for union and the Christian Orient's desire to maintain its ancient theologies and customs to meld together to create a truly global catholic and orthodox faith. The universal goals of the Church did not need to be incongruous with adapting local customs to the Church's teaching and, boldly enough, vice versa. As the next chapter shows, the Jesuits confidently put forward a picture of a Christian

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<sup>94</sup> From 1580 to 1640, Portugal, the Jesuits' other major supporter for their overseas missions, was under the control of Spain. Therefore, while the realms were technically treated separately, any crown-funded endeavors in Portugal were driven by Hapsburg policies.

Orient that, while vociferously independent in its theologies, customs, and liturgies, was nevertheless unmistakably Catholicizable.

## + Chapter Five +

### **Evangelical Ethnography: Finding Christian Universalism in the Cultural Geography of the Christian Orient**

The features that are taken into account are not the sum of ‘objective’ differences, but only those which the actors themselves regard as significant.  
– Fredrik Barth<sup>1</sup>

In the decades before the 1590s, the Jesuits who traveled to the Near East left a significant corpus of letters and reports that reflected their experiences as missionaries; and they delved into their theological and ecclesiological battles with great detail. In the case of Giovanni Battista Eliano, there was also the effort to grapple with a personal struggle in the face of his evolving identity and to locate his place within the Society of Jesus. However, the evaluations of whom the Jesuits encountered on the first three missions nevertheless remain the result of, not the purpose of, the authors’ intentions in writing. While the Jesuits on the first three missions, Eliano in particular, may have used their missionary targets and others they encountered as subjects in their efforts to describe, these characters were nevertheless tertiary. The missions themselves remained central in the letters written and sent to Rome. In general, the descriptions in missionary texts served no greater purpose than to inform the Jesuits’ superiors of the trajectory of the missions and the efforts of the Jesuits themselves. Even in the case of Eliano and his personal preoccupations, these texts rarely provided a more nuanced investigation of the nature of the Christian Orient and its place within the Ottoman world.

After the death of Eliano, however, the Society’s missionaries who were sent to the Christian Orient did not solely produce the same types of documents that were the hallmark of the earlier missions. In addition to safeguarding their own reputation as men of God by reporting

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<sup>1</sup> Fredrik Barth, “Introduction,” in Id., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Boston: Little Brown, 1969), 14.

with as much exactitude as possible (or as necessary) the details of the missions themselves, the Jesuits who traveled to the Ottoman Empire in the 1590s also began describing their experiences not in terms of the missions or even in terms of their individual places within the Society of Jesus. Rather, they began participating in a pan-European trend of the late sixteenth century that helped develop a compendium of knowledge of lands near and far. European interest in exploration and discovery of new lands and peoples spurred the writing of travelogues and accounts of foreign lands that became popular reading material amongst Europe's literate.<sup>2</sup> The Jesuits who wrote these accounts were well-versed in the tradition of European travelers and their descriptions of the East, such as the famous Fernão Mendes Pinto (1509-1583). While his complete account, *Peregrinação*, was not published until 1614, Mendes Pinto's exploits were well known to Europe's literati, especially amongst the Jesuits. His 1554 letter written from Malacca was published at the Jesuit college in Coimbra and quickly circulated throughout Europe. Mendes Pinto had also worked with the Jesuits in India and Japan, and he even had a brief two-year stint as a member of the Society. And it was Mendes Pinto who lent the money to Francis Xavier for the construction of the first Catholic Church in Japan.<sup>3</sup>

Having read the accounts of Mendes Pinto and others, such as Duarte Barbosa's *Livro* (1518) and Gaspar da Cruz's *Tratado das Cousas da China* (1569), Jesuits were poised to try their hand at doing more than just writing to Rome to describe their efforts in expanding the influence of the Catholic Church. This is not to say that the Jesuits were no longer dedicated to the missions, or that official reports to Rome no longer reflected efforts to represent themselves and their labors in the best light possible. To the contrary in fact, Jesuits began using the genre to

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<sup>2</sup> Rab Houston, "Literacy and Society in the West, 1500-1850," *Social History* 8, no. 3 (October 1, 1983): 269-293.

<sup>3</sup> For more on Pinto and his influence on early travel narratives, cf. the editor and translator's introduction to Fernão Mendes Pinto, *The Travels of Mendes Pinto*, trans. by Rebecca D. Catz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), xv-xliv.

provide a better understanding of the difficulties presented to them during their time in the Levant in order to, in some way, ameliorate future Jesuit efforts in the Christian Orient. For this reason, these descriptions went hand in hand with the expansion of Catholicism abroad. Since many of the narratives that were produced in this period reflected European nations' colonial ambitions, the fledgling rhetoric of empire coming from European courts coincided with the Jesuits' efforts to save souls.<sup>4</sup> As a result, the missions that the Jesuits undertook were part and parcel of the nascent process of globalization and the spread of European influence abroad. While the sixteenth-century missions were not indicative of the European hegemony that came centuries later, as the first three missions to the Christian Orient have shown, this nevertheless meant that Jesuit descriptions of the New World or of Asia, and in this case of the Christian Orient, reflected a desire to Catholicize, success or failure notwithstanding. The Jesuits' descriptive writings of the Ottoman Empire thus strove not only to spread knowledge of the Near East, but also served the broader purpose of exploring the unique position of the Christian Orient in order to gauge how best to integrate it into Roman Christendom.<sup>5</sup> This effort to spread the idea of a universal Church was, as the Jesuits called it, a civilizing mission; and part of this mission was to explore as thoroughly as possible the missionary theatre.

In this chapter, I examine the travel narratives of two Jesuits who traveled to the Levant in the 1590s, Diego de Salazar and Girolamo Dandini. Their travelogues reflect much of the Society of Jesus's spiritual mission as well as the Society's effort to evangelize in the Ottoman world. Like their predecessors, Salazar and Dandini had an implicit goal in writing their travel narratives: to present themselves as devout defenders of the faith. But while this was very similar

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<sup>4</sup> In the Portuguese empire this is no clearer than in Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540-1750* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> John M. Headley, "Geography and Empire in the Late Renaissance: Botero's Assignment, Western Universalism, and the Civilizing Process," *Renaissance Quarterly* 53, no. 4 (December 1, 2000): 1119–1155.

to the efforts of Eliano and others throughout the course of the prior thirty years, these texts are completely different. Salazar and Dandini sought to do more than describe their experiences. They were attempting to say something very specific about the Christian Orient and its liminality between Latin Christendom and the Ottoman world.

This process took place in three parts. First, they strove to lay bare the boundaries of difference between Islam and Christianity. This effort to denigrate Islam particularized it and put it beyond the borders of the universal Church. Second, when describing Christians, both men painstakingly sought to discover evidence of sameness between Catholicism and the Christian Orient in an effort to show that the civilizing process was not nearly as complex as it was in other missionary theatres and that these communities could be saved from the Ottomans. Thirdly, the Jesuits described the cultural geography of the Christian Orient and re-created a sense of Christian space in the Ottoman Empire in an effort to ecumenize Christianity and to show that the goals of the Church were within reach. Their works showed the burgeoning belief that integrating the Christian Orient needed to be a viable part of the spread of the faith on a global scale. And although the effort to examine the Ottoman Empire resulted in an anthropological universalization, i.e. the legitimation of the Ottomans' existence in the early modern European consciousness, it was this recognition that legitimated the Ottomans as an exterior particularity against which the Christian Orient needed to be defended.

In sum, these three aspects were seamlessly integrated into the narratives of their voyages; this interweaving allowed for coherent accounts describing the authors' experiences while not precluding them from giving thick cultural descriptions of the languages, customs, religions, lands, and peoples encountered. For this reason the authors took on the role of ethnographers, whose goal was to converse with the ethnographic subject. This "conversation" is

a flow of social discourse, as much a reflection of the author's view of his or her own culture as a window into the observed. In this sense ethnography is only as predictable as the culture of the author; therefore Jesuit travel narratives are mirrors of the authors' culture in a much more pronounced way than the monthly letters or the official *relazioni*. In every instance, they examined similarities and differences in tandem, evaluated the relative size of the gaps between the two extremes, and attempted to weigh which cultural groups were closest (more civilized) and furthest away (less civilized). To the far left of this spectrum were the Jesuits, always hovering as third-party writers aloof but never removed. To the far right remained the most heretical of the Ottoman Empire, the Turk. Along this cultural spectrum of civility and barbarity lay the various Christian groups of the Near East, some more civilized, some less. The Jesuits attempted to compartmentalize these differences and rationalize who was where. And like their predecessors who had laid the path to missionizing the Christian Orient, they saw it as their individual duty as Catholic missionaries (and, though they would not have realized it, as early modern ethnographers) to sort this all out.

But before the texts can be approached, it is essential to explore how the travel narratives produced by these two men fit into the Society of Jesus's understanding of the Christian Orient and how it fit into the larger Catholic rhetoric of salvific universalism. One text that provides a framework for understanding the role of ethnographic explorations and their importance for missionary activity is Giovanni Botero's *Relationi Universali*. While not a travelogue, it nevertheless laid bare important characteristics of how ethnographic description was part and parcel of the introspective nature of Jesuit spirituality and also exposes how these texts fit into the larger puzzle of how the Jesuits and the papacy were beginning to view the Christian Orient (and the rest of the world).



## Giovanni Botero and the universalist-particularist dialectic in early-modern thought

Giovanni Botero's *Relationi Universali* (1597) marks a shift in Jesuit interpretations of the Christian Orient and its place within the early modern Catholic intellectual framework.<sup>6</sup> Written over the course of the 1590s, the *Relationi Universali* is Botero's magnum opus. Best known for his *Della Ragion di Stato* (1589), a treatise that argued for moralistic statecraft in an effort to challenge the Machiavellian notions of consent to rule,<sup>7</sup> Giovanni Botero was one of the most influential Jesuit writers of the late sixteenth century in terms of expanding demographic and geographic knowledge of the world to a European audience. Born in 1544 in southern Piedmont, Botero was a bright student, and was a peer of Robert Bellarmine, studying dialectic with the great Counter-Reformation thinker at the Collegio Romano.<sup>8</sup> Botero quickly rose through the Society, only to withdraw honorably in 1580. Botero spent the 1580s splitting his time between Milan and Paris, during which time he wrote *Della Ragion di Stato*. By 1590, he was back in Milan in the service of Federico Borromeo, nephew of the famed Catholic reformer, Carlo Borromeo. Botero worked closely with the younger Borromeo, especially after Federico's elevation to archbishop in 1595. Under Borromeo's patronage, Botero released the *Relationi Universali* in four volumes. The *Relationi Universali* examines in turn the kingdoms, cities, peoples, customs, faiths, and languages of the world, with some diversions into the mysterious

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<sup>6</sup> For a fuller biography of Botero, cf. Luigi Firpo, "BOTERO, Giovanni," *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Vol. 13 (Rome: Istituto della enciclopedia italiana), 352-362. A good exploration of Botero's importance is Robert Bireley, "Giovanni Botero: Founder of the Tradition (1589)," in Id., *The Counter-Reformation Prince* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 45-71.

<sup>7</sup> There is a substantial body of literature about Botero's *Della Ragion di Stato* and questions of Jesuit views on reason of state in general, far more than is necessary to refer to here. A good start is Chapter Five, "The Confrontation of Reason of State," in Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 84-111. A very good English-language translation of *Della Ragion di Stato* is P.J. and D.P. Waley's 1956 edition: Giovanni Botero, *The Reason of State* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1956).

<sup>8</sup> The relationship between Botero and Bellarmine has not been fully explored. However, the universalist strains of the *Relazioni Universali* reflect much of Bellarmine's thought on Christian universalism. Cf. in particular Peter Godman, *The Saint as Censor* and Stefania Tutino, *Empire of Souls*.

world of figures like Prester John. Volume One is a general description of the lands and peoples of the known world; Volume Two explores the political world and relations between states; Volume Three examines the various religions, practices, and mores of the peoples of Europe, Asia, and Africa; Volume Four is an investigation of the Americas and the path of introducing Christianity to the indigenous populations of the New World. Botero wanted to spread the knowledge of places he had seen, as well as those about which he had only heard, in an effort to offer a monumental examination of the world.

But Botero also had another goal in mind as well. In the dedicatory letter to Carlo Emanuele, Duke of Savoy, Botero explained that “after having finished a peregrination of many years,” the most important goal of the text was to uncover “the state of the Christian religion for the world.”<sup>9</sup> Botero’s desire to investigate the power of the Catholic Church on a global scale seems, on the surface anyhow, an odd goal for an ethnographic text such as the *Relationi Universali*. However, when tied to the rhetoric of early modern Catholic missionary activity, the idea of the work being universal is important to bear in mind. While this partly has to do with the sheer breadth of the subjects studied as well as the depth of Botero’s elaborations on them, the universality that Botero desired to achieve was not some type of esoteric examination of things foreign. Rather, the universality that mattered was the idea of the globe as an interconnected web of peoples and places, the idea of a comprehensive amalgamation and, through Christianization, a homogenization of peoples under the umbrella of the Roman Church. Thus, Botero’s desire to engender the concept of Catholicism as a global faith represented a universalist rhetoric that placed missionaries in particular at the fore; they would be both the ones evaluating how to proceed as well as the soldiers of Christ who carried out the missions. The nature of Botero’s

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<sup>9</sup> Giovanni Botero, *Le Relationi Universali di Giovanni Botero benese, divise in quattro parti ... Con le figure, & due copiosissime tauole* (Venice: Nicolò Polo, 1597), dedicatory letter to Duke Carlo Emanuele.

work universalized Catholicism and positioned evangelization driven by Rome as the means to unify the world. Entirely lacking throughout, even in his descriptions of states, is the conviction that politics and state building were the driving force in this universalizing process. Given his influence in early modern political thought due to *Della Ragion di Stato*, it has been posited that Botero examined political entities, European and otherwise, as aspects of a much larger universalizing process that can be viewed (misconstrued) as European proto-imperialism. However, the dominant discourse of the text held political powers to be agents in the defense and

spread of the universal Catholic faith. It should be remembered that this in no way anticipated a European impetus to control the world; European imperialism, which had not yet developed in Botero's lifetime, and would not develop for arguably another two centuries, was therefore not tied to the rhetoric of a universal Catholic commonwealth.<sup>10</sup>

In his effort, Botero sought to depict Islam as the most immediate threat to the universal Church. He was in no sense a pioneer here. Rather, these types of appraisals preoccupied much of what scholars investigated about

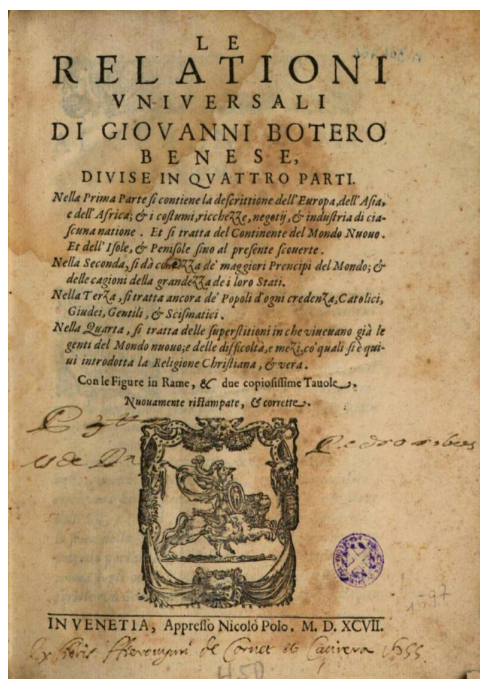


Figure 1. Giovanni Botero *Le Relationi Universali* (1597)

Islam and the Near East, including where the Christian Orient fit into what was admittedly now a Muslim world. From William of Tyre in the twelfth century to Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini in the fifteenth, European intellectuals' attempts to understand their most proximate foreign enemy created a framework through which scholars like Botero constructed a thorough ethnological

<sup>10</sup> John M. Headley, "Geography and Empire in the Late Renaissance: Botero's Assignment, Western Universalism, and the Civilizing Process," *Renaissance Quarterly* 53, no. 4 (December 1, 2000): 1132.

evaluation of the Turks and their subjects while still maintaining their universalizing goals. The result was that whoever was in power was the most Muslim, the most tyrannical, and therefore the gravest threat to Europe. While each author had a unique objective in writing, the basis for nearly every evaluation of Muslim empires and the tyranny by which they ruled was the centrality of universal history, and the universalizing nature of Christianity in particular, in both medieval and Renaissance-humanist thought.<sup>11</sup> This was Botero's rhetorical end as well.

Part ecumenical propaganda, part anthro-geographical examination of peoples and places, the *Relationi Universali* represents a desire to explain the foreign and rationalize it as either something to be destroyed or something less bizarre and therefore amenable to being civilized. Wildly popular, with over one-hundred editions as well as translations into Latin, German, English, Spanish, and even Polish within Botero's lifetime, Botero's exploration of the globe as a potentially Christian world spurred further interest in the foreign while simultaneously integrating Europe into a larger world that seemingly grew smaller with every page turned.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the other rhetorical element at play, and against which Botero and those who followed him were reacting but also participating in, was the particularistic aspects of cross-cultural encounters and the dissemination of knowledge in general. The result of this was a rapidly expanding knowledge base, as new ideas and pieces of information seeped in. In many cases, this occurred in the works of early modern Catholicism's most prominent writers, both in fiction and in literary non-fiction. Writers such as Michel de Montaigne and Miguel de Cervantes, to name only two, examined their ever-expanding world and their own place in it with heightened uncertainty. The skepticism of cultural rectitude in Montaigne's "Des cannibales" or the emphasis on the unknown and the fluid found in the passionate love triangle shared between Ricardo, Leonisa,

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<sup>11</sup> Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought*.

<sup>12</sup> Luigi Firpo, "BOTERO, Giovanni," *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Vol. 13 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), 357-358.

and Halima in Cervantes's "El amante liberal" undercut the project of universalism by questioning the absolute status of cultural and religious purity.<sup>13</sup> But it was the effort to universalize that allowed these doubts to manifest themselves; and it was the existence of this doubt that propelled some like Botero (and Bellarmine) to strive for universalism. The two paradigms worked in tandem to preserve each other as rhetorical possibilities.

This dialectical paradox set up between universalism and particularism enabled Botero to use markers of difference to preserve borders between who was or was not Catholic and why those who were not remained not. Even though his project emphasized closing that gap, the evaluations of these groups reflected European intellectuals' desire to know difference in order to judge it. The propulsion behind this was to eliminate peculiarities in order to create a world of specificities that reaffirmed the notion of "the Church" as a real entity. Therefore, despite the creation of parity between diverse groups that otherwise would have deconstructed their relative amenability to Catholicization, the result is a project that, despite its particularizing undercurrents that are fetishized in the effort to describe, presents a set of differences that are otherwise amenable to the process of the universal, i.e. Catholicization. This apparent contradiction in Botero's work lies in the existence, in the early modern period, of an interconnected world in which multiple empires vied for prominence.<sup>14</sup> One of the hallmarks of confessionalization was the burgeoning understanding of the state as a religio-political ideal. If

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<sup>13</sup> Miguel de Cervantes, *Novelas ejemplares*. I: *La gitanilla*, *El amante liberal*, *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, *La española inglesa* (Madrid: PML, 1995). For more on Cervantes' "El amante liberal" and its influence, cf. Ottmar Hegyi, *Cervantes and the Turks: Historical Reality Versus Literary Fiction in La Gran Sultana and El amante liberal* (Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 1992) and Anne J. Cruz and Carroll B. Johnson, *Cervantes and His Postmodern Constituencies* (New York: Garland Pub., 1999). "On the Cannibals," in Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays*, trans by. M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Classics, 1993), 228-241. For a good introduction to the Socratic skepticism of Montaigne, cf. Celso Martins Azar Filho, "Montaigne e Sócrates: Cepticismo, Conhecimento e Virtude," *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 58, no. 4 (October 1, 2002): 829-845.

<sup>14</sup> This theory of universalism-peculiarism as a congruent paradox in the history of ideas from the early modern period to the modern is elaborated upon by Étienne Balibar in "Racism and Nationalism," in Étienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, eds., *Race, Nation, Class*. Cf. in particular the section of this essay, entitled "The Paradoxes of Universality," pp. 54-64.

we transfer this to “the Church,” we see a religious organization, as amorphous as it admittedly was, articulating universalist goals that were not incongruent with the particularisms of the early modern period. It believed it could achieve its *particular* universalizing goals, just as the other entities believed so about their own goals.

The *Relationi Universali* is a project that mirrored Europeans’ growing sense of self-awareness, and desire to question it, as well as their eagerness to increase their knowledge of what lay beyond Europe in order to Christianize it. Placing Botero in this context, rather than solely as a Jesuit author describing missionary theatres, enables us to see Botero and the Jesuit authors of travel narratives both within a European intellectual framework and within a larger, interconnected world as a whole.<sup>15</sup> Rather than dismissing the *Relationi Universali* and the travelogues as problematic texts because of their Catholic universalist views, these texts allow for examining how Jesuits reflected upon what they learned and whom they met, and how this was tied to their desire to promulgate the faith. As a result, these travelogues, building off the tradition of universalism as well as particularist evaluation, reflect how the Jesuits’s experience in the Christian Orient was an important element of early modern Europe’s self-reflection and a part of the effort of early modern Catholic missionaries to initiate the spread of the first true global faith, again success and failure notwithstanding.<sup>16</sup> Thus, Salazar and Dandini communicated the same dialectic between universalism and particularism that provided the intellectual framework of the *Relationi Universali*; their travel narratives are a part of the larger

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. Jerry H. Bentley, “Early Modern Europe and the Early Modern World,” in *Between the Middle Ages and Modernity: Individual and Community in the Early Modern World*, edited by Charles H. Parker and Jerry H. Bentley (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 13-32. Also, cf. Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *Rethinking World History: Essays on Europe, Islam, and World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

<sup>16</sup> This is the position taken by Luke Clossey in his *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions*. While Clossey seemingly ignores the extent to which early modern Europeans relied upon previously established networks of exchange in the spread of Catholicism around the globe, I agree with him when he argues that, “In speed and extent this expansion of Catholicism dwarfed even the explosion of Islam out to Iberia and Transoxania in the century after the death of Muhammad. The Catholic Church was the preeminent international institution of the era, as even contemporaries recognized” (1).

trajectory of late sixteenth-century Catholic thought, as they articulated the same give and take between universalism and particularism pervasive in the Catholic intellectual currents under which these two wrote.

### **Beyond the boundaries of the universal: Jesuits and the Turk**

Like most Europeans who recounted their experiences in the Ottoman Empire, Salazar and Dandini immediately took note of the drastic differences they encountered, particularly concerning the mores of the Muslims, whom they invariably called Turks. These descriptions, because they were often full of highly charged rhetorical descriptions of heresy and ritualistic heteropraxy, emphasized specific markers of Ottoman culture and faith that shed light on what they saw as the most significant differences between Christendom and the Islamic world. Furthermore, as they sought to disseminate their descriptions of foreignness throughout Europe, they strove, whether subconsciously or not, to place these perceived cultural oddities in a language that their intended audience recognized. In many cases, these two authors fell back on the standard tropes of placing familiar labels on what they did not fully understand (or perhaps chose not to): heresy, backwardness, faithlessness, barbarism, and the like. While the method of describing is clear (and in many ways not entirely unique) it is the underlying, unspoken goal of Salazar's and Dandini's works that reflects the Jesuits' larger project in the Ottoman Empire, namely Catholicizing the Christian Orient. Both authors saw crossing over into the cultural and religious milieux of the Muslim world as the point of no return for Eastern and Oriental Christians, the moment in which the project of saving their souls broke down. But in order to make that clear, full descriptions (along with, in the case of Dandini anyhow, vitriolic invectives) of the Muslims' religious and cultural practices were necessary.

Born in 1539 in Cuenca, Diego de Salazar decided to enter the Society of Jesus in 1560, beginning his novitiate at Alcalá de Henares, about thirty-five kilometers to the northeast of Madrid. After holding several posts in the Society, Salazar was in the service of King Philip II of Spain, working as his apostolic representative charged with the duty of visiting the most important churches and holy sites of the king's realm. Pleased with Salazar's dedication to the faith, Philip then sent Salazar to all the major holy sites of Italy and Germany; and he was eventually sent to the Holy Land in 1590.<sup>17</sup> Salazar's *Libro de las peregrinaciones del Catholico Rey Don Philippe Segundo de glorioso memoria que mandó hacer al Padre Diego de Salazar Marañon de la Compañia de Jesus...* is now fragmented and incomplete, being held in three separate locations: the Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid, the Jesuit college of Alcalá, and the British Library. The copy held in London contains some of the descriptions of the Holy Land, but in pieces only. The most complete version of Salazar's work comes to us in an Italian translation of the Spanish original found in the Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia. The translator's identity is unknown; however, as Sami Kuri has suggested, the linguistic similarities between the Spanish original and the Italian translation are close enough that Salazar himself may have been the author of both versions. Because it is mostly intact, and perhaps autograph, the Italian version of sixty-seven folios is the most reliable and definitive version of Salazar's travels.<sup>18</sup>

The second writer, Dandini was born in Cesena in 1554. Dandini entered the Society of Jesus in 1579 at the novitiate of Sant'Andrea al Quirinale in Rome. He taught philosophy in Paris and Padua until 1590, when he became rector of the Jesuit college in Forlì, and then in

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<sup>17</sup> "DE SALAZAR, Diego Marañon de Porres," in, MPOIII. 355-356. A brief description of Philip II of Spain's desire to have Salazar complete the pilgrimage in his name is inventoried in the Jesuit archive: ARSI, *Tolet.* 37 ff. 271v-275r.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Sami Kuri's introduction to the document in MPOIII.146-147 for a further elaboration on the fragmentation of Salazar's travelogue.



1593 moved on to Perugia as professor of theology. He then traveled to Lebanon in 1596 at the request of Pope Clement VIII to head a synod that would ensure that Eliano and his companions' work there had not been for naught. Dandini was strong theologian, and was better known for his theological treatises, such as *De corpore animato* and *Ethica sacra: hoc est de virtutibus, et vitiis libri quinquaginta*, and his time as a professor of philosophy than for his travels as a missionary.<sup>19</sup> Despite this, Dandini's travelogue became an important text. Originally published in 1656 in his hometown of Cesena, Dandini's *Missione apostolica al patriarca, e maroniti del Monte Libano, e sua pellegrinazione à Gierusalemme* is still perhaps the most in-depth travel narrative of the late sixteenth-century Levant, providing a clear window into his view of the Ottoman World. Containing 234 folios, and divided into three books and sixty-five chapters covering various topics ranging from his time on Cyprus to the election of a new Maronite patriarch, Dandini's work provides far more detail on the customs of the Muslims (as well as other subjects) than Salazar's. Additionally, as Dandini's work was also published in English as *A Voyage to Mount Libanus* and French as *Voyage du Mont Liban*, titles that are completely devoid of the religious meanings prevalent in the original Italian title, it is a far more influential text than Salazar's *Libro de las peregrinaciones*.<sup>20</sup>

The evaluations of Muslims in the two travelogues reflect how European travelers were fascinated by and wished to explore the deep seated disparities in cultural practice. Both writers immediately targeted the Muslims' customs to evaluate cultural difference. In both cases they explored Muslims' practices by relaying them in familiar terms. But doing so nonetheless relegated the Muslims to a second tier of religiosity. For example, Salazar's description of

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<sup>19</sup> Anna Foa, "DANDINI, Girolamo," *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Vol. 32 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), 423-424. A fuller description of Dandini's life can also be found in Carmelo Capizzi, "Un gesuita italiano di fine Cinquecento per i maroniti," *Studi e ricerche sull'oriente cristiano* 1 (1978): 19-36.

<sup>20</sup> A German version appeared as well, under the title of *Reisebemerkungen über die Maroniten*, but not until 1792.

mosques as “the church of the Turks, where they perform their ceremonies and some form of sermons, as I have seen one time,” reflects an attempt to comprehend the religious customs of the Muslims and understand how they stacked up against what he saw as proper religious practice. However, calling a mosque a kind of church, despite the author’s intention of giving the reader an understanding of the Muslims’ practices, rendered the Muslims as somehow broken Christians who worship in an almost-church. Salazar did recount how the Muslims “were seated on certain benches and in a certain order” and that there was much preaching, all familiar sights for any visitor to a church.<sup>21</sup> But rather than simply explaining that mosques have “certain men, or boys” who sang in an “acute and sonorous voice” to call people to prayer, he was compelled to relay how different this was from the traditional Catholic practice of ringing bells to call the hours of the Divine Office.<sup>22</sup> And Salazar continued these types of broken-Christian evaluations when he described Ramadan:

Recently, that is, at the new moon of July, the Turks began to make their Lent, when that Moor or Turk who oversees the mosque cries out from the tower at certain times of day and night. And he makes notice from the said tower with a flickering light almost all night long. Their fasting practice is to not eat all day, until they see the stars of the night, when they eat endlessly and abundantly.<sup>23</sup>

By couching their practices in language familiar to the reader, such as calling mosques Muslim churches or Ramadan the Islamic Lent, Salazar exposed the importance of religious orthopraxy,

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<sup>21</sup> MPOIII.151. “sonno la chiesa delli turchi, dove fanno le loro ceremonie et qualche modo di prediche, come io ne vidi una volta, passando di passo per il detto bazzarro, che n’erano al entrar d’una moschea delli turchi assai, quali stavano a sedere in certi banchi et in un certo ordine, predicandovi o facendo loro un ragionamento un turco, caminando o passeggiando fra loro con un bacheta in mano.”

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., “In vece di campane, sogliono gridare certi huomini o vero putti; questi hanno la voce acuta et sonora. Il che fanno ogni dì, poco avanti l’giorno, al mezzodì, alla hora del vespero, due hore di notte o poco più, et alla mezza notte, il che se ne fa al castello con più solennità, cioè con musica di certe pine o d’altri stromenti.”

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 163-164. “In questi giorni, cioè alla luna nova di luglio, cominciano i turchi a far la loro quadregesima, quando quell moro o turco che ha pensiero della moschea e di gridar sula torre in certe huore di giorno e di notte, avisò dalla detta torre piena a torno di lumicino accessi quasi tutta la notte. Il digiuno loro è non mangiar in tutto l’dì, fin vedono la stella alla notte, quando mangiano senza fine pur assai.”

reflecting the need for the Jesuits to cleanse the Christian Orient, lest groups like the Jacobites or Armenians start worshipping in almost-churches.

Dandini, for his part, did not rely on quasi-Christian descriptions in *Missione apostolica*. While Dandini did employ them at times, such as likening Turkish beads to the Rosary, Dandini was much more critical when he led off with an invective into their heretical and vicious nature, reflecting his project's stronger anti-Muslim stance; Dandini viewed the Muslims as a contaminant that needed to be removed from the Christian Orient in order for it to be saved. Unlike Salazar, Dandini belittled and disparaged Islam. He explained that "they have stunning liberty, and license to sin, from which comes every grave wickedness," as they seemed to believe they were able to remove their sins simply by washing their feet.<sup>24</sup> Obviously, the parallels between this and the removal of sin in the acts of baptism and confession (not to mention Jesus' washing of the feet at the Last Supper) were conveniently forgotten. However, for Dandini this apparent Muslim license and the belief that they simply removed their sins in a simple, un-Christian act of Muslim barbarism was enough for him to condemn their actions as Turkish vice and licentiousness coupled with irreligious rituals. Dandini furthered this in Chapter Twelve of the work, "On their Greed and Garbage," where the Turks had a wild appetite for money, and more readily sought it than their own salvation. And oftentimes they strove to stomp under foot the Christian communities in order to fuel their greed, rendering them all the more base:

Therefore the reason the Turks pursue us Christians so much, move us mortals, and continue wars [against us], is not for what others have estimated, for adventure, faith, or religion. Rather, they do it for their greed of money and unbridled appetite for possessions, and, even more so, to stretch the boundaries of

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<sup>24</sup> Girolamo Dandini, *Missione apostolica al patriarca, e maroniti del Monte Libano, e sua pellegrinazione à Gierusalemme* (Cesena: Neri, 1656), 42. "Hanno maravigliosa libertà, e licenza di peccare, dalle quali proviene ogni sceleraggine quantunque grave, percioche col lavarsi li piedi credonsi rendere così netta l'anima da tutti li peccati, come il corpo dall'immondizia."

their vast empire. Therefore, this vice together with the sensual, the carnal, reigns far too licentiously over every one of those people without any restraint.<sup>25</sup>

Two things are exposed in this invective: first, the Turks' true religion is vice; it was the cultural foundation that defined who they were, as far as Dandini saw it; second, the expression "us Christians" exposes how Dandini felt that the Catholic world and the Christian Orient were inextricably linked in the fight to defend the future of Christendom against Turkish threats. Immersion in this world put the Christian Orient in danger, as vicious Turkified liberties could seep into Christian communities and unravel the work that the Jesuits had carried out. And this could prevent the Jesuits from carrying forward with their efforts.

At times Dandini was not as vitriolic. In some cases, the negative evaluations were veiled in apparent objectivity; but even here, as in his description of their dress, Dandini pushed to expose the Turks' baseness. Dandini explained that "those of noble blood or for other dignity, wear the great turban," as the turban served as a marker of social class. Dandini then gave an elaborate explanation of how color marked one's place in Ottoman society. For instance, commoners wore white shirts or sometimes other colors on rare occasions. But they never wore black or green, as Franks tended to wear black; and green was the color of the people of Mohammed, a color far too lofty for a commoner to don. For this reason as well, Christians dared not dress in green, as it would have been a severe insult to the Muslim establishment and would have put them and their communities at grave risk.<sup>26</sup> Dandini's account of Muslim dress as well as their religious customs reflects an interesting preoccupation with outer appearance as a mode of cultural evaluation, especially concerning perceived differences. As Jan-Petter Blom has

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 43. "Per tanto la causa per la quale i Turchi perseguono tanto noi Christiani, e ci muovono mortali, e continue guerre, non è, come altri per avventura stimano, la fide, e religione, ma più tosto l'ingoridiga del denaro, e l'appetito sfrenato dell'havere, e di più oltre stendere li confini del loro vasto Imperio, percioche questo vizio insieme col sensuale, e carnale regna sopra ogn'altro in quella gente senza ritegno alcuno troppo licenziosamente."

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 35-39.

suggested, “the organization of ethnic identities does not depend on cultural diversity *per se*, as generally assumed in anthropology, but rather on the assignment of particular social meanings to a limited set of acts.”<sup>27</sup> Blom’s point about the differentiation of cultural and ethnic meaning is reflected in Muslim clothing customs. Their preoccupations with facial hair and who wore which colors (particularly the fact they forced *dhimmi* to dress a certain way), is, anthropologically speaking, no different from how Europeans emphasized modes of dress and style in signifying various social strata.<sup>28</sup> How *dhimmi* dressed meant that the Turks sought to use clothing as a means to preserve cultural boundaries between themselves and others. But Dandini did not see it that way; for him, Eastern and Oriental Christian dress was a Turkish dictate that reflected how the Christian Orient was dangerously close, even in daily life, to the Turk. Not only were they immersed in the world of the Turk, but they were also culturally fettered, limited in their own cultural development by Turkish oppression. This furthered his preoccupation with saving the Christian Orient from that cultural milieu.

For Dandini, the exploration of their vices, and even just minor differences like clothing styles, provided a roadmap for how to free the Christian Orient from the vices of the Ottoman world and save the souls of Eastern and Oriental Christians in the process. Daniel Vitkus has argued that travel and license went hand in hand in the English consciousness, as the very act of exchange, whether it be consumer goods or cultural capital, “was thought to bring disease to the body politic of the English Protestant commonwealth.”<sup>29</sup> But Dandini’s writing demonstrates that

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<sup>27</sup> Jan-Petter Blom, “Ethnic and Cultural Differentiation,” in Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, 76.

<sup>28</sup> A good start for exploring clothing styles and fashion mores in early modern Europe, a topic beyond the scope of this work, is a special edition of the *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, entitled *Cultures of Clothing in Later Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, edited by Margaret Rosenthal. Cf. *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 39:3 (Fall 2009). In terms of women’s fashion, considering Dandini spent a fair amount of time describing it, cf. Joyce de Vries’s recent review article, entitled “Fashioning the Self in Early Modern Europe: Gender, Consumption, and Material Culture” in the *Journal of Women’s History* 23, no. 4 (2011): 187–197.

<sup>29</sup> For his argument, Vitkus explores numerous travel conduct guides and other pieces of literature that elaborated on how one should conduct oneself in a foreign land, especially in terms of preventing oneself from

this was not purely an English Protestant problem, or even the problem of Europeans alone. And it also illustrates that Dandini believed that this type of exchange could work in the opposite direction. As religious reform and social disciplining became principal aspects of confessionalization, the body politic of Catholic states and the body of the Church became preoccupied with preserving their religio-political frontiers, both from Protestantism and from the incursions of the Ottoman Empire. And Dandini believed that these efforts should be extended beyond the borders of the faith; the Christian Orient was also included in what needed to be protected from the two-headed monster of Protestantism and Islam.<sup>30</sup>

The result of this ethnographic project plays upon the universal-particular dialectic, as it is an exposition into how the Jesuits viewed the Muslims' mores as direct threats to the Christian Orient. In these two texts, the Muslims remained the ultimate enemy: they lacked morality and religious rectitude, and this often manifested itself in social customs. They strove to construct the Muslims as somehow broken, foreign, heretical barbarians much like other travelers did. Salazar and Dandini did so in order to present the Christian Orient as evangelizable. When the descriptions of Muslims are tied to the larger purpose of the Jesuit presence in the Ottoman Empire, laying bare the debauchery and lechery of the Turk presented the baseness of the Ottoman world as a threat to the purity of the faith. Therefore, these descriptions both promoted

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"going native." In particular there was Bishop Joseph Hall's invective against travel all together (1617) as well as Thomas Neale's *Treatise of Direction, How to travel safely, and profitably into Forraigne Countries* (1618). Cf. Daniel Vitkus, "Poisoned Figs, or "The Traveler's Religion": Travel, Trade, and Conversion in Early Modern English Culture," in Stanivukovic, ed., *Remapping the Mediterranean World in Early Modern English Writings*, 41-57. The quote is from p. 43.

<sup>30</sup> This is elaborated upon more fully in Megan C. Armstrong, *The Politics of Piety: Franciscan Preachers During the Wars of Religion, 1560-1600* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2004) as well as Filippo de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). For more on state building and communal participation in civic religion, a particularly interesting study is Stephen D. Bowd's *Venice's Most Loyal City: Civic Identity in Renaissance Brescia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010). It also should be noted that, at this time, English and Dutch merchants, mostly Protestant, had begun making their way into the ports of the Ottoman Empire. This posed another issue for the Jesuits, as both the Ottomans (albeit infrequently) and the Protestants were suspect of the Jesuits' efforts in the Christian Orient. This is more true in the seventeenth century, and is thus not elaborated upon here.

the universal truth of the Church and explicated the uniqueness of evangelizing in the Christian Orient, showing that even the process of universalization had nuanced elements that needed to be understood. The problem of Ottoman incursions and threat of cultural translation problematized the Jesuits' efforts, and these travelogues served to expose this. But also essential to this was exposing the unique nature of the Christian Orient and exploring means to cleanse it of its Turkish elements.

### **Forging a path toward Christian ecumenism: Rome and the Maronites**

In their descriptions of Eastern and Oriental Christians, both writers focused overwhelmingly on the Maronites, as they were already Catholic but possessed some of the perceived heresies that were seen as most problematic. For this reason, the Maronites appeared to be the best case study through which Salazar and Dandini were able to present avenues of cultural ecumenism as a means of presenting the Christian Orient as a unique cultural entity, independent of the Ottomans, that could be cleansed and integrated into the faith. Whereas the Muslims were the unconvertible infidel that threatened to sully the faith, the Maronites were ready to reform and integrate themselves into the universal Church. These descriptions were the Jesuits' push to break down the barriers between Catholic and Eastern/Oriental Christianity to the point where Christianity needed no geographic or sectarian modification. This movement toward ecumenism emphasized understanding how these peculiarities could be integrated into the larger framework of Catholic orthodoxy. Salazar and Dandini articulated an ideal of salvific universalism that did not rely solely upon force. Even though some, such as Gregory XIII and Cardinal Santa Severina, believed that religious parity between the Churches could only be achieved through thorough Latinization, these descriptions of Maronites show that Jesuit missionaries believed that Catholicization and the preservation of the Christian Orient were not

mutually exclusive. In other words, saving the Christian Orient from the Turks did not have to mean irrevocably altering it.

This effort is apparent in their descriptions of the Maronite leaders. When Salazar encountered the four Maronite archbishops at the monastery of Our Lady of Qannubin, he explains that they went about with “large turbans on their heads.” However, Salazar quickly modified this, explaining that their turban was “not white like those of the Turks, but of a blue color,” and told how they were “very humble and poor” and that they “go about very poorly dressed,” and that the priests and monks who serve the people are all “subject to the High Pontiff and the Roman Church.”<sup>31</sup> Likewise, upon meeting Patriarch Sarkis, Dandini explained that he felt great piety reverberating from the patriarch, even if he was adorned in a turban.<sup>32</sup> While this would have been a stark contrast from how one would expect an archbishop to appear by early modern European standards, Maronite clerics were seen as true men of the Church, untainted by the lechery and greed of Islam.

This praise for the Maronites continued in their descriptions of the clerics’ religious devotion. At one point, Salazar performed a Latin Mass for the Maronites, wearing a vestment that had been sent by Cardinal Antonio Carafa during Eliano’s time with the Maronites.<sup>33</sup> This showed that the Maronites had integrated some Latin elements into their liturgy, as they had accepted the use of Latin vestments for at least a decade, and were moving closer to what Salazar

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<sup>31</sup> MPOIII.153. “Ci erano però 4 archivescovi, tanto humili e poveri che piu tosto parevano servitori del convento, come in fatto ci servirono tutti quanti a tavola et a quantosivoglia altro nostro bisogno. Vanno assai pessimamente vestiti, con li turbanti grandi in testa, non però bianchi come quelli delli Turchi, vanno alla campagna per laborar, zapar e arar la terra, come qualsivoglia altri contadini sogliono fare. Vi sonno di quelli che vivono solitarii come Romiti, altri spariti per molte altre case e conventi che hanno in detto monte, tutti però sottoposti al Sommo Pontefice e Chiesa Romana.”

<sup>32</sup> Dandini, *Missione apostolica*, 55. “Trovai questa assai bella, e buona, se bene alquanto oscura, e poveramente tenuta, e questo viddi con poco splendore in una cameretta spogliata d’ogni tapezzaria, perche oltre la Professione Religiosa, e Monastica, nient’altro permette la tirannica & insaziabile ingordigia de’ Turchi. Entrai dentro dov’egli stava sedendo sul letto con il solito Patriarcale Turbante in capo...”

<sup>33</sup> MPOIII.154. “Alla matina, al una hora, vi dissi la messa con un bel paramento donato gli dal cardinal Carraffa...”



and his superiors in Rome envisioned for an Oriental Church in communion with Rome. But Salazar also recounted how, despite this change, they celebrated the Mass and other divine offices in Syriac and performed “particular ceremonies that they have preserved according to their own mode and use,” such as saying a Mass in the evenings shortly before sunset. The preservation of the Maronites’ own customs that had no roots in the Latin form of Catholicism did not seem to bother Salazar, as they were customs that the Maronites had retained from antiquity.<sup>34</sup> Likewise, Dandini’s evaluation of the monastery at Qannubin captures the essence of the unique situation of the Christian Orient. As the most important church in the community, the patriarchal monastery was “very beautiful.” However, it was “dark and poorly maintained,” with “little splendor.” While he had great praise for this poverty and simplicity, he recognized that piety was only part of it. Dandini explained that this was mostly due to the Turks, whose “insatiable greed” pressed on and tyrannized the Maronites from renovating and maintaining a church of such importance.<sup>35</sup> Again, however, the Maronites persevered in their struggle.

Both men also admired the deep devotion and the austerity of the monks. Salazar lauded how during Lent “not only do [the monks] not eat eggs, dairy etc., but they also abstain from fish and from drinking wine; and their wine is the best and tastiest in all of Mount Lebanon,” showing that, despite their ostensibly peculiar practices and customs, the Maronites’ ability to abstain from seemingly fantastic wine for forty days rendered them, as far as Salazar seemed to

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 153-154. “La messa et gli altri uffitii divini, tutto hanno e celebranno in lingua caldea, con alcune ceremonie particolari che hanno salvato al loro modo et usanza, come l’dir la messa alla sera, come le habbiamo noi sentita quel di che arrivammo là, poco avanti del caricar’ del sole. Si levano alla mezza notte o poco doppoi a dir il matutino; alla matina, al alba, le laudi.”

<sup>35</sup> Dandini, *Missione apostolica*, 55. “Andai prima alla Chiesa, e poi al Patriarca. Trovai quella assai bella, e buona, se bene alquanto oscura, e poveramente tenuta, e questo viddi con poco splendore in una cameretta spogliata d’ogni tapezzaria, perche oltre la Professione Religiosa, & Monastica, nient’altro permette la tirannica, & insaziabile ingordigia de Turchi.”

think, good Catholics.<sup>36</sup> Dandini's praise for the Maronite ecclesiastics was perhaps even more lofty than Salazar's. While his explanation that the Maronite rite was "in many ways different from our Latin [rite]" and that "they do not use a maniple, stole, and chasuble similar to ours" could render the Maronite liturgy beyond what was to be expected of a universal church, Dandini was deeply moved by their piety and asceticism, and believed that their peculiarities fit within the framework of Catholicism.<sup>37</sup> And because these monks lived in the remotest parts of the mountains, dressed humbly and simply, and practiced strict dietary austerity, Dandini was convinced that these monks "could be some relic of the ancient hermits that (if you read the most excellent authors) lived apart from the community of man, and lived in most great numbers in the deserts of Syria and Palestine."<sup>38</sup>

In exposing how they lived, Dandini presented Maronite monks as thoroughly Catholic in their rigorous adherence to the ancient practices of the true faith. Dandini then explained that their dedication as servants of God predated the oppression of the Turks, meaning that their poverty was voluntary and "was caused by their ancient constitution, by which these holy hermits and servants of God strove to flee from idleness, and procure food with their own

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<sup>36</sup> MPOIII. 153-154. "non mangiano delle uova, cosa di latte etc, mà se ne astengono anche dal pesce e da bere l'vino, quale hanno però buonissimo et assai gustevole per tutto l'sudetto Monte Libano."

<sup>37</sup> Dandini, *Missione apostolica*, 79. "...che il Rito loro, e Culto Ecclesiastico era in molte cose differente dal nostro Latino..." "Non usano Manipolo, Stola, ò Pianeta simile ale nostre..." The Council of Trent declared in the twenty-second session that rites with precedent may be maintained and need not adhere to all prescriptions of the Tridentine Church so long as they did not run contrary to the Church in matters of doctrine and dogma. The text reads: "Lastly, that no room may be left for superstition; they shall by ordinance, and under given penalties, provide, that priests do not celebrate at other than due hours; nor employ other rites, or other ceremonies and prayers, in the celebration of masses, besides those which have been approved of by the Church, and have been received by a frequent and praiseworthy usage." Cf. J. Waterworth, ed., *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent*, 161.

<sup>38</sup> Dandini, *Missione apostolica*, 75-77. "Questi mi credo per certo, che possino essere qualche reliquia de gli antichi Romiti, quali (secondo si legge apresso gravissimi Autori) vivevano ritirati dalle comunanze de gli huomini, & habitavano in grandissimo numero in quei deserti della Siria, e Palestina; & à questa mia credenza ne vengo persuaso da fondati argomenti."

industry, and spend other times performing manual labor.”<sup>39</sup> Their generosity also struck Dandini, as they welcomed not only Christians but even Muslims into their monastery for solace and sustenance.<sup>40</sup> For the Jesuits, this was a devout sect, dedicated to a simple life. Even if they did not perform a Latin rite, even if they wished to confess to Salazar but “spoke such little Italian, and no Latin, that I had to guess or draw out (as they say) with discretion what he meant,” Dandini and Salazar both recognized that the Maronite monks practiced an ancient form of Christian piety that good Catholics would do well to emulate, or in some way integrate into their daily lives, making the process of salvific universalism, at least in this sense, more dialogic than was often admitted in Rome.<sup>41</sup>

It is when they discussed the Maronite communities, however, that both men showed more concern about Turkish lechery. It appears that Dandini in particular saw the community as the place where baseness could enter. Dandini made it clear that the typical Maronite wardrobe was unique to the Levant: while they donned a turban, they tended to go with bare legs rather than full-length garments. They were also “more like the Italians than any other nation” in terms of physical appearance. Similarly, Maronite women were, according to Dandini “most modest, and the mirror of honesty,” and their manner of dress “is quite similar to what is used in our country, being long, going to the ground, with their shoulders and chest most diligently covered.” For Dandini, they showed a certain reticence that he hoped his audience would appreciate and

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 77. “Pensano molti, che l’occuparsi tanto quanto essi fanno in fatiche del corpo, & in applicarsi alle cose de’ campi, & agricoltura proceda dalla povertà, & oppressioni Turchesche, mà io giudico sia causato dall’antico istituto, con che quei Santi Romiti Servi di Dio solevano per fuggire l’ozio, e procacciarsi con le proprie industrie il vitto, spendere alcuna parte del tempo in opere manuali...”

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>41</sup> MPOIII.153-154. “Uno di loro sene volse confessar a me, per la affettione che portano alli franchi, et particolarmente alli italiani; mà parlano tanto puoco l’italiano, e niente del latino, che bisognava indovinare o cavar (come si suol dire) per discretione, quel che voleva dire.” One of these pietistic traditions was the Augustinian tradition of personal piety and reflection. In the sixteenth century, its major proponent was Erasmus. For more, cf. Peter Iver Kaufman, *Augustinian Piety and Catholic Reform: Augustine, Colet, and Erasmus* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1982), 111-142.

admire; their poverty prevented them from indulging themselves in the vices of the Turk, and Dandini even explained that they lacked the vanity that European women possessed.<sup>42</sup>

But there were troubling elements of Maronite customs. On occasion, some wore trousers, according to the Turkish custom. They also tended to sit on carpets rather than fixed furniture, and ate in a communal fashion, using no silverware, which resembled Turkish barbarity rather than European civility. And occasionally, despite their modesty, Maronite women wore bracelets and certain headbands that resembled Turkish accessories.<sup>43</sup> The problem was that everyday Maronite men and women, regardless of how Catholic they were in profession, and even in practice, nevertheless remained exposed to Turkish mores in ways the clergy was not. It is unclear if Dandini believed that the “pressures” and the “tyranny” of the Ottomans had somehow caused them to act a certain way or to change their physical appearance to make themselves more culturally acceptable to the Ottomans. Of course, the reality of this was to the contrary; the Maronites were staunch Catholics and had no desire to become Muslim. While Dandini never overtly condemned the Maronites for their Turkish manners – he tended to describe rather than evaluate or pass judgment – when placed next to his discussions of the Turks in other parts of the work, they take on a new meaning, one that reflected Dandini’s fear that the Maronites’ existence had been, and continued to be, problematized by their presence within an Ottoman world.

The other issue that Dandini pointed out concerning the Maronite community was that, despite their piety, the average Maronite’s religious experience was in dire need of reform. In the Chapter Twenty-Six of Book One, “On Abuses Found,” Dandini seemed shocked by the inefficiency and imperfections in practice that he discovered, such as how confession was

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<sup>42</sup> Dandini, *Missione apostolica*, 63-68.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

haphazardly carried out because of the ignorance of the confessors. According to Dandini, they were unable to differentiate between venial and mortal sins; as a result, the penance issued never seemed requisite to the sin, leaving the Maronites' souls in danger. More troublesome was the fact that "at times they give Holy Communion to some who have not confessed their sins," which potentially left the communicants outside of grace.<sup>44</sup> But perhaps the biggest problem standing in the way of true Catholic orthopraxy and belief was the fact that the Maronite priests, despite their devotion, "never preach to the people the Word of God, nor to children, and stupid men teach Christian doctrine." Instead, priests and deacons simply read homilies of saints rather than actually preach.<sup>45</sup> For Dandini, this created a community of devoutly ignorant Christians, entrenched in false belief and action because of poor clerical practice. This would have hit home for early modern Catholic reformers. Diocesan and parochial reform were central to the confessionalization process within Catholic Europe, so Dandini's exposition of the need to institute reform on this level with the Maronites would have made complete sense if the Maronites were going to be seen as true Catholics.<sup>46</sup>

Likewise, in the following chapter, "On the Errors Imposed by Others on that Nation," Dandini lists thirteen errors that were believed to have been introduced by other sects, particularly the Jacobites. Dandini explained that most of these erroneous views were not common, being held only by some. Dandini was not extremely concerned, as they were rare in practice. When he did find them in books, the Maronites condemned them, saying that they were

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 87. "Danno talvolta la Santa Comunione ad alcuni non confessati delle sue colpe."

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., "non si predica mai alli popoli la parola di Dio, ne alli fanciulli, & huomini idioti s'insegna la Dottrina Christiana, e le cose necessarie alla salute, mà radissime volte solamente si legge nella Chiesa un Homilia d'alcun Santo in vece di Predica."

<sup>46</sup> For a good case study on ecclesiastical reform on the diocesan level, cf. Francesco C. Cesareo, *A Shepherd in Their Midst: The Episcopacy of Girolamo Seripando (1554-1563)* (Villanova, PA: Augustinian Press, 1999).

simply the works of Jacobites that they recognized as heretical.<sup>47</sup> For him, the real issue, and the error that he spent the most time elaborating was error four: “If because of adultery, or for other reasons and infirmities, one can repudiate his wife and take another.”<sup>48</sup> Dandini pointed out that Maronite divorces, albeit rare, were not allowed by the Maronite community itself. Rather, these divorces were the product of “Turkish violence and tyranny.” As he explained, a number of Maronite men, out of lust, had sought divorce in order to marry women with whom they were enamored. However, these divorce-seekers, recognizing they could never obtain patriarchal approval, paid a fee to the Turkish emir, who granted their request and ordered the patriarch to carry out the divorce. One case occurred while Dandini was present in Lebanon. He explained that the patriarch was deeply saddened by having to participate in such a scandal. But with little other choice, Sarkis granted the divorce, lest his refusal anger the emir and bring only more hardship to the Maronite community.<sup>49</sup> Here, Turkish vice and greed had crept into the community. Divorce simply would not have been possible, Dandini knew, if the Maronites were freed from the Turkish yolk. Desiring to divorce an adulterous wife, while abhorrent to Dandini as it were, could at least be seen as a husband’s impulsive reaction to infidelity; but the lasciviousness and cupidity of divorce out of lust for another woman was clearly, so it seemed, a Turkism, a practice tied to the sexual license and abject depravity of Turkish culture. Although most Maronites did not feel this way, for Dandini this action being acceptable to some Maronites was due to their proximity to the profligate Turk. Furthermore, the Maronite husbands’ ability to

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<sup>47</sup> Dandini, *Missione apostolica*, 98.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 91. “Che si potesse per la fornicazione, & altre occasioni, & infermità, ripudiare una moglie, e pigliarne un’altra.”

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 92. “se n’erano con denari ricorsi all’Emyr, & impetrata da quello, havevano poi con lettere dello stesso tenore fatto ritorno al Patriarca, quale per degno rispetto havebbe dissimulato; Quest’è certo, che essendo occorso un caso simile mentro io mi trovavo in quell luogo non acconsenti mai il Patriarca, mà non potendovi rimediare dissimulò il fatto...”

circumvent the authority of the patriarch and obtain a divorce from the Ottomans themselves demonstrated for Dandini that the community was enveloped by Turkish power.

The only way out of this piety-heresy stasis in which Salazar and Dandini found the Maronites was, much as it was the case in Europe, institutional and clerical reform. Salazar pointed to the great work of men like Eliano and how they had come to Lebanon to serve the spiritual needs of the Maronites. But it was Gregory XIII and his opening of the Maronite College in Rome in 1584 that Salazar saw as the true avenue toward reform.<sup>50</sup> Dandini agreed, and also believed that more needed to be done to help the Maronites preserve their faith. In one sense, with the infrastructure the Jesuits had set up at the Collegio Romano and the establishment of the Maronite College in 1584, all that was required was a group of intelligent Maronite youths to be instructed in Rome and quickly dispatched to Lebanon. And this, considering the cooperation of the community, should be easy to obtain.<sup>51</sup> While it seems that the Maronite College was a purely Roman project that could theoretically strive to deconstruct centuries of Maronite religiosity, what is apparent instead is the integration of the Maronites' ancient practices into a theological and liturgical reformation; in other words, it is a unique Maronite-Latin ecumenism that, while still very Syriac in nature, remained thoroughly Catholic. One problem that did arise concerning the Maronite College, however, was that the community remained poor and unable to sustain the priests upon their return, in part because of the Turks' oppressive economic measures. Dandini suggested that the Maronites should exempt these priests from paying the head tax owed to the Ottomans, showing again that it would not be solely

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<sup>50</sup> MPOIII.153. "E sebene sonno stati certi giesuiti mandati dal Papa Gregorio 13 per amaestrarli et instruirli nelle cose della fede, ma non cosi a sufficienza che non habianno bisogno d'un simil ammaestramento, al che esso Papa ne prevede col Seminario che institui a Roma delli maroniti, che in quello se allevino con obbligo di ritornare nella lora patria, qualle è il suddetto Monte Libano, ad insegnar questo che huanan impartito loro."

<sup>51</sup> Dandini, *Missione apostolica*, 108. "Questo fù, che si determinasse l'età necessaria à quelli, che si dovevano mandare, e che non fossero affatto rozzi, mà oltre al leggere, e scrivere havessero ancora qualche principio di grammaca [sic], accioche coll'impiego ivi di minor tempo nelli studi, ritornassero poi più presto al servizio della loro patria."

the Jesuits, but the Maronites as well, who would ensure that Catholicism obtained in Mount Lebanon. Dandini remained confident that these priests, who were “extremely knowledgeable of Roman matters,” would be welcomed into the community and that the Maronites would maintain their place within the Roman Church as a result of their efforts.

Dandini also believed that his reason for being in Lebanon, the synod of 1596, would play an essential role in establishing how the priests trained in Rome would lead the Maronites. As Dandini explained in his final report, written in 1597, the synod’s main purpose was to fix their errors that mostly lay in the Maronites’ performance of the sacraments and in matters of dogma, such as holding proper Christological views.<sup>52</sup> In the *Missione apostolica*, Dandini exhaustively detailed the thirteen-point profession of faith as well as the twenty-one canons of the synod, providing the reader with an in-depth examination of what was expected of good Catholics. Here it seems to be a Latinization project *par excellence*. In the profession of faith, the Maronites reaffirmed purgatory and original sin. They also confirmed that “in addition they professed to use in all the sacraments forms [that were] in no way different from the Roman usage.” In a sense, Dandini presented the Maronites as devout Catholics; while, on the other hand, he acknowledged that it had to be, in some ways, forced upon them, as culturally it was not something inherent.<sup>53</sup> This is likewise the case in the canons of the synod. All of the canons, such as the requirement that bishops visit their diocese at least once a year to perform confirmation, demonstrate Dandini’s desire to implement the same types of reforms that the Church envisioned taking place throughout Europe. This effort on Dandini’s part was an important step toward

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<sup>52</sup> Dandini’s final report is inventoried as ARSI, *Gall. 95 II*, ff. 226r-229v.

<sup>53</sup> Dandini, *Missione apostolica*, 97-98. “Professorono in oltre usare in tutti li Sagramenti le forme in nulla diverse dall’uso Romano, e dimostranti l’azioni del Ministero. *Io ti battezo, Io ti segno, Io ti assoluo in nome del Padre, e del Figliuolo, e dello Spirito Santo*, e solamente nel Battesimo nominare la persona, che si batteza *Io ti battezo Pietro, &c.*”



uniting the Maronites with Rome not solely in terms of recognizing papal authority; true bonds could only be achieved once the Maronites *acted* Catholic.

But the inclusion of the synod in the *Missione apostolica* does more than laud Dandini or tell us something about a hegemonic Church bent on converting the world. Rather, Dandini exposed the Maronites' willingness to self-Catholicize. Through the profession of faith and the Maronites' eagerness to adhere to the decrees of the synod, the synod textually depicts a semiotic web of orthopraxy and belief that is to be the basis for the newly re-Catholicized Maronites' religious culture in which they themselves are participating. One needs only look to the Maronite patriarchs' desire to receive the pallium from Rome upon their election, or the exchange of letters between Maronite prelates and Catholic leaders. In the days following the synod, Monsignor Georges 'Amira, an alumnus of the Maronite College, wrote to Father General Acquaviva to praise Dandini and Fabio Bruno, who "have given most great edification and satisfaction in our land, and have worked with us with much prudence and justice." Here, the lines of communication suggest a dialogue between Rome and Lebanon, not forced implementation of Catholic reform.<sup>54</sup> Throughout, the discussion focused on a partnership in instituting doctrinal reform and spiritual formation, showing again that reforming piety from within rather than rigid Latinization of the Maronites would be the long term solution.

It seems on the surface of things that both Salazar and Dandini exposed the futility of attempting to integrate into the Catholic world the Christian Orient on its own terms, and that Latinization was to be the most effective means of carrying this forward; the need to train priests in Rome and to send Jesuits every decade or so, suggests this. The world in which they lived,

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<sup>54</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I f. 217r. "hanno dato grandissima edificatione et sodisfatione in questi nostri paesi, et hanno trattato con li nostri con molta prudential et giudicio." Fabio Bruno (1553-1634), Dandini's companion in 1596, should not be confused with Giovanni Bruno (1544-1623), who traveled to Lebanon with Eliano in the 1580s.

disconnected from Rome, would almost assuredly lead to a return to these errors; after all, it had only been fifteen years since Eliano's departure, and the errors he had hoped to eradicate had begun to creep back in by the time Dandini arrived. However, both *Libro de las peregrinaciones* and *Missione apostolica* demonstrate the Maronites' desire for true piety, even if the ability to obtain it was sometimes lacking. The result of this was a concerted effort to direct Maronite devotion toward Catholicization that the Maronites actively embraced. And Dandini was pointedly aware of this, as was Salazar, since the Maronites as presented in the travel narratives were both Catholic yet somehow on the fringes, close to apostasy. In both cases, the Maronites were dedicated Catholics. On one hand, they were very loyal to Rome and seemed willing to do all that Rome desired to achieve full union. But on the other, they also seemed to have Turkish tendencies grounded in vice and license that needed fixing. And so long as those affinities remained, it would be very difficult for them to be considered fully Catholic.

The result is that, rather than arguing that Latinization would be the only way to carry out the goals of the Church, Dandini and Salazar agreed that the only means of success would be to make the universalizing process one that worked from both sides. While this by no means meant that all the Christian Orient was ready for this kind of dialogue (even the Jesuits themselves would have admitted this was not the case with, say, the Copts), they nevertheless suggested that *if* Catholicization were to take place in the Christian Orient, it would have to be, in some sense, on the Eastern and Oriental Christians' terms. Rather than seeing the Christian Orient as just another foreign, backward place in need of civilizing, something only achieved through Roman intervention (this was the prevailing view in Rome, after all), Salazar and Dandini showed that the piety of the Maronites, while perhaps primitive compared to Roman standards, was in fact compatible with the ideals of Catholic spirituality and therefore did not

need to be rejected for the Maronites to be considered orthodox. Questions of theology aside (that part was never debatable from the Roman perspective), the universalizing process did not need to be a Roman-Jesuit project alone. As a result, constructing sameness between Latin Christianity and the Christian Orient was not the issue. Their firm faith in Christ was already an indelible bond. Rather, it was finding a way to make differences in religious practice compatible with one another.

### **Ecumenical geography: the topography of Christian universalism in the Holy Land**

The final element in integrating the Christian Orient into the Catholic world lay in Salazar's and Dandini's geographic evaluations of the Levant, particularly how various Christian sects shared holy space. In their descriptions, Salazar and Dandini sought to extend the sanctity of Christendom to the Near East while simultaneously reaffirming its holiness as a source for renewed sanctity in the consciousness of the European mind. This topographical dialectic between ancient piety and the orthopraxis of early modern Catholicism sought to break down the borders (geographical, epistemological, ethnographical, even chronological) between Rome and the Christian Orient. Here, the universalizing project became an intellectually geographical one. Rather than emphasizing the minutiae of liturgical difference, it was the idea of a common bond in devotion to Christ as manifested in religious space that was central.

In Salazar's explorations of the Christian sites of the Levant, he exposed the same level of ancient piety that would later be present in Dandini's descriptions of the Maronite monks. Before exploring the cityscape of Tripoli, Salazar took a brief voyage three miles south of the city, in the direction of the Qalamoun Mountains. While there, Salazar visited the grotto and

church dedicated to Margaret of Antioch.<sup>55</sup> For the Christians in the vicinity of Antioch, Margaret was an important home-grown martyr-saint whose submission to Roman persecution fit in well with Christianity as a minority faith in the Ottoman world.<sup>56</sup> And when he was later traveling within the Wadi Qadisha, the center of Lebanese monasticism, Salazar learned that a small grotto there, also dedicated to Margaret, possessed one of her arms in its reliquary, which he longed to see. Salazar, however, was saddened to see the condition of the relic itself, which was “poorly maintained,” in a church “under and in a large grotto and stone cliff.”<sup>57</sup> While he was saddened by the poor physical condition of the church, Salazar nevertheless admired the veneration for Margaret that the Antiochenes and the Lebanese demonstrated.

Likewise, he elucidated how the rural landscape of Syria and Lebanon was physically barren yet undulating in its rugged beauty. There was a certain danger in the hinterlands of the Levant, as the beauty was contrasted by the perceived lawlessness and vagrancy of the rural Ottoman Empire.<sup>58</sup> After Mass one day, Salazar accompanied a group of Maronites to see some of the famed *Cedrus libani*, the Lebanese cedar trees that enveloped the countryside. He explained that he was only able to see smaller ones close to the city, as the largest and most famous were on the top of the mountains, and the roads leading to them were impenetrable due to the deep snow that coated them. These cedars, known colloquially as the Horsh Arz el-Rab, or Cedars of God, held deep religious and communal significance for the Maronites, and Salazar rightly relayed that these ancient trees “were like a great relic” that the Maronites venerated.

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<sup>55</sup> She is often conflated with St. Pelagia, a fourth-century martyr who died during the persecutions of Diocletian. Aside from the *Golden Legend*, no written distinction between Margaret of Antioch and Pelagia exists.

<sup>56</sup> MPOIII.150.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 154. “Mi fecero veder anco questo che io desiderava, cioè el braccio di Sta Marina, che è un osso intiero del braccio, quel io sapeva, molto avanti, essere apresso di loro, tenuto poveramente... La chiesa, come pur la casa, è fabricata sotto e dentro d’una gran grotta e rupe di sasso vivo.”

<sup>58</sup> The European understanding of Ottoman culture as uncultivated and uncouth is partly explored in Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, *Orientalism in Early Modern France: Eurasian Trade, Exoticism, and the Ancien Régime* (Oxford: Berg, 2008). Cf. also Gerald McClean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire Before 1800* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 27-61.

However, despite the deep religious significance, “you cannot remain long in that place without danger, on account of the thieves that are in those mountains”; the religious purity of the cedars was lost to Ottoman bandits, whose appetites were whetted by the possibility of a lucrative attack.<sup>59</sup>

The rest of rural Lebanon received the same treatment. Salazar noted how, as they traveled through Mount Lebanon, it was “a beautiful landscape” with great, vast plains stretching below the high peaks. But it was “sterile” with no one making any effort to cultivate the fields, rendering it magnificently depressing in its desolation.<sup>60</sup> Likewise, as he travelled through the Eastern Lebanese Mountains, Salazar described the beautiful but “unprofitable” fields, fields that lacked again any agricultural commitment from the people.<sup>61</sup> In Salazar’s depictions of the Lebanese countryside, which were accurately described – including the Wadi Qadisha – as rugged and uncultivated, this barrenness was the result of Ottoman lawlessness and license. Despite this, even though no definitive solution is offered, Salazar at least suggests that the pious rusticity of the Christian Orient preserved itself in spite of the Ottoman threat to its existence. This hinted at the notion that something about the Christian Orient was inherently orthodox and thus could be integrated into the faith while still maintaining some of its ancient, non-Latin elements.

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<sup>59</sup> MPOIII.154. “e puoco doppoi ce ne andamo a piede a vedere gli cedri – non gia quelli piu famosi e grandi, i quelli sonno in cima del monte, perciò che al hora quella strada era coperta di neve – ma quelli altri piu piccoli sonno vi però assaissimi. [Calammo e salimmo una calata e salita tanto longa et erta, che restammo assai strachi, sudati e bagnati, massime io come più debole]. E pigliatone ogni uno la sua parte [di detti cedri], come che fusse un gran reliquia, cene tornammo subito in dietro, perché non si va in detto luogho senza pericolo, per conto alli ladri che vi sono assai in quelle montagne.” The *Cedrus libani* continues to play an important role in Lebanon. It is the national symbol, and is on the Lebanese Republic’s flag.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 156. “Vedemmo per la strada, una bella compagna, quasi tutta pianura, mà sterile cioè non coltivata.”

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 157. “Vedemmo questo giorno il Anti-Lebanon, così detto perciò che stà in contro al Monte Libano. Et sul tardi passammo per qualche parte di esso Anti-Libano, sotto del quello è anche una bella pianura disutile però e non coltivata.”

This continued as well in Salazar's and Dandini's investigations of the urban fabric of the Ottoman world. The effort to do so is linked to the ideal of the city as the center of the missionizing process. The city itself held a special place in the Jesuit apostolic mission, as it was within cities that most Jesuit ministries took place. From the order's inception, the Jesuits structured themselves around urban settings. As "an urban being, a Roman's Roman," Ignatius was able to shape his ministry "to the needs of the Roman Church of his time, when modern urban culture was being born." Likewise, if Christianity was defined as a long-standing urban religion, then the Jesuits placed themselves within the "complicated dialectic" of an "ongoing dialogue with urban culture."<sup>62</sup> Therefore, when Salazar and Dandini described the urban centers of the Ottoman world as centers of Christianity and potential targets for Catholic confessionalization, they were viewing the Church as an urban phenomenon. With cities as densely populated as Damascus or Aleppo, the Christian Orient could easily facilitate the missionary work of the Jesuits.

In his description of Beirut, Salazar colorfully re-created the cityscape: "This city of Beirut has a beautiful elegance with its vineyards and gardens, that is botanical gardens, about its port and homes and castles that make for a beautiful vista."<sup>63</sup> To the reader, Beirut was a flourishing port city, safe from the banditry of the countryside, and well kempt in its greenery and urban splendor. Any vestiges of danger that would have troubled the Jesuits, such as those found in Cairo in the 1560s, were nowhere to be seen, replaced instead by copious gardens and breathtaking views of the harbor. Antioch received similar treatment as well. Salazar arrived about two hours after sunrise, which gave the walls of the city a golden shimmer. With vast

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<sup>62</sup> Thomas M. Lucas, *Landmarking: City, Church & Jesuit Urban Strategy* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997). The quotes above can be found on p. 3.

<sup>63</sup> MPOIII.161. "Questa città di Baruthi ha un bel garbo con le vigne e giardini, overo horti, atorno col suo porto e case e castelli che fanno un belvedere."

mountains in the distance, the city's ramparts looked all the more majestic. Added to this was the Orontes River meandering by, "rendering beautiful the plains [surrounding the city], full of gardens and fields." He then compared the beauty and the ingenuity of the irrigation system to the one he had seen once while passing along the Tagus near Toledo in his native Spain.<sup>64</sup> Once within the city, Salazar visited the many holy sites, including the fountain where St. John Chrysostom baptized converts, and the church where Peter had purportedly held a council with some of the other apostles.<sup>65</sup> When re-creating Tripoli for his reader, Salazar explained that there were numerous important churches within the city for the various Christian groups that lived alongside their fellow Muslim urban dwellers. The bell towers rose above the smaller buildings below, which would have been a familiar sight throughout Catholic Europe. While they competed for the eye's attention with the more prominent and more numerous minarets, Dandini envisioned a cityscape that presented Christianity as a persevering faith despite Ottoman incursions. Even when he found structures like the remnants of the Church of Saint John the Baptist, which were located within an Ottoman fortress and hidden under the foundations of the ramparts and the castle's mosque, Salazar presented an urban Christian Orient that persevered.<sup>66</sup> The Near East appeared an urbanized, civilized world ready for the Jesuits to come and perform their ministries much as they had in the urban centers of Europe.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 165. "È così mirabile, e ben singolare a veder, la muraglia di questa città; questa, se tutta era piena come dicono, era delle più grandi del mondo, perciocche havendo come há il sito in piano. Sono certe montagne assai alte e discoste, alla banda del levante; per la cima o somità delle queste va la detta muraglia forte, bella e con belle torri, le mura assai larga, secondo che dicono... Passa un bel fiume Oronte, quel rende bella tutta questa pianura, piena di horti e giardini inacquati con un certo ingegno et instrumento; questo haveva visto solamente in Ispagna nel fiume Tajo, nella città di Toletto, passando una volta di là..."

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 166-167.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 150-151. "Furono già alcune chiese... et massime de S. Giovanni Battista, qual è dentro della fortezza o castello; e però nessuna di loro può vedere, senon sia per di fuori e de passaggio o in fretta, senza fermarsi, ne manco di provvedere in questo modo quella del castello, essendo che niente si scorge di essa, se non si entra in esso castello, il che non si permette o non si può far senza sospetto e pericolo."

<sup>67</sup> One work that explores these urban ministries in depth is Lance Lazar, *Working in the Vineyard of the Lord: Jesuit Confraternities in Early Modern Italy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005). Also cf. O'Malley,

One of the issues that faced this urban brand of Christianity, however, was Ottoman imperial control. Pervasive throughout this image of the urban Christian Orient was the bazaar, the large, covered maze of vendors selling “all the things of which one may have need.”<sup>68</sup> The bazaar likewise played a central role in the urban fabric of Damascus. When Salazar visited the fountain in which Paul of Tarsus was baptized, the fountain itself was overshadowed by its location “in the public street that leads to the bazaar, which is similar to the one in Tripoli, where there are shops selling everything.”<sup>69</sup> But the bazaar was more than just the center of economic life and cultural exchange, or even an important point of urban orientation. The bazaar was an Ottoman project built and controlled, much like fortresses, mosques, and other monumental buildings, in order to promote the imperial agenda of Constantinople.<sup>70</sup> As a result, it stood in stark contrast to the Holy Land that Salazar set out to recapture. But however much the inclusion of mosques and the bazaar reaffirmed the pervasiveness of Ottoman confessionalization in the social and economic aspects of everyday life, Salazar nevertheless depicted an urban landscape that made room for true Christian piety. Therefore, even though these cities were thoroughly Ottomanized, they still possessed their ancient Christian heritage.

Dandini likewise strove to present urban space as the center of Christian ecumenism in spite of Ottoman control. In his effort to restore in the European imagination a blessed topography of Jerusalem, Dandini placed these holy sites outside of their contemporary state by emphasizing their historical and religious importance. This ahistoricity forced the audience to

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*The First Jesuits*, 91-242; Paul V. Murphy, “Jesuit Rome and Italy,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits*, edited by Thomas Worcester (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 71-87.

<sup>68</sup> MPOIII.151. “Questo bazzarro essendo tutto coperto a modo di portichi, se ne stende assai in lunghezza et anche in larghezza, perciò che sene va traversando d’una strada in altra, dove si vendono tutte quante le cose che ci fanno bisogno, massimamente lunedì et giovedì, che sonno gli giorni di mercato loro.”

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 158. “... a visitar e veder tutti quelli luoghi santi che in detta città sene vedono, cominciando dalla fontana dove S. Paolo benedetto fù batizzato, qual è dentro la città, nella strada publica che vien detta bazzarro, simile a quello di Tripoli, dove sonno le boteghe da vendere ogni cosa.”

<sup>70</sup> Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh, *The Image Of An Ottoman City: Imperial Architecture And Urban Experience In Aleppo In The 16th And 17th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 54-55.



focus on shared devotion, not what kept the various Christian sects apart. The first step for Dandini was to recreate for the reader the cityscape through a physical description of the city in terms familiar to the reader. Rather than evaluate the architectural style of the city, or even to give the same types of edificial typology that Salazar did, Dandini instead kept his portrayal rather non-descript. He did give a long list of particular buildings found within the city, such as the various churches, holy places, and monuments. But he also spent equal time explaining that the walls circumnavigating the city were approximately five or six miles long, and that there were four principal gates and two minor ones.<sup>71</sup> This brief account of the city strove to familiarize the reader with Jerusalem-as-city, a concept that would have resonated with the average reader; the cityscape would have been a universal notion, something that was the same everywhere, regardless of where the city was located. Furthermore, Jerusalem was no different from Rome in its importance both as a Catholic city and as the center of some of the most holy sites of Christianity. This continued as he detailed the monastery of the Franciscans: “Having only a small cloister, and nearby it some small and narrow rooms,” the true splendor of the monastery was found in the friars’ “patience [and] constancy of spirit in their continuous and untold works” in preserving holy sites that had grown out of their love of God.<sup>72</sup> For Dandini, the Franciscans’ presence and continual piety in their work to serve the sites of the Holy Land, which was in part their purpose for being there, demonstrated that Jerusalem was much like any truly Christian city, as religious buzzed about the city performing their apostolic ministries.

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<sup>71</sup> Dandini, *Missione apostolica*, 146-148.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 151. “Il Monastero poi nel resto è molto povero, & angusto, havendo solamente un piccolo chiostro, & attorno d’esso alcune, poche, e strette camerucchie; ricchissimi però d’una sola cosa, sopra ogn’altra quivi necessaria, sono gli habitatori di quello, cioè di pazienza, e di costenza d’animo nelli continui, & indicibili travagli, che à tutte hore per amore di Dio...”



Figure 2. Jerome Nadal, "Solemn Entry into the City," *Adnotationes Et Meditationes in Evangelia* (1595)

upon this was Jerome Nadal's widely distributed and well known *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia*, a set of 153 etchings of Gospel scenes with accompanying Gospel readings and meditations.<sup>73</sup> Assisting in the practice of *The Spiritual Exercises*, the *Adnotationes* gave visual representations of the scenes to be meditated upon in the *Exercises*. While a devotional text, it provided images of a Jerusalem, such as "Solemn Entry into the City," [Figure 2] that reflected the same contemplative as well as geographical-descriptive goals of Dandini.

Dandini's effort to ahistoricize Jerusalem in order to sanctify it would have been well received, as it was deeply reflective of Ignatian spirituality. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius pushed the exercitant to apply the five senses to the stories of the Gospel such as Palm Sunday in an effort to situate oneself within the scene. This created the composition of place in the mind of the exercitant, enhancing the devotional experience. Because of Ignatius's heightened sensibilities, the *Exercises* reflected his conception of the role of the senses in meditative prayer. Building

<sup>73</sup> While Nadal's work was not published until 1595 in Antwerp by the Wiericx brothers, the images were widely distributed throughout the Society and were used as devotional texts in novitiates and colleges. For more on these images, see Walter S. Melion, "The Art of Vision in Jerome Nadal's *Adnotationes Et Meditationes in Evangelia*," in *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels*, Jerome Nadal, S.J., edited and translated by Frederick A. Homann, S.J., with an introductory study by Walter S. Melion (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2003); Thomas Buser, "Jerome Nadal and Early Jesuit Art in Rome," *The Art Bulletin* 58: 3 (Sept. 1976): 424.

Neither the *Missione apostolica* nor the *Adnotationes* attempt to rationalize how the Holy Land looked at the time of Christ; rather they emphasized devotion to Christ as central, placing the image of Jesus into a non-descript location that could be amended based on the reader/viewer's taste. Because of the importance that the Passion of Christ played not only in Jesuit spirituality but in early modern Catholic popular devotion as well, the effort to reconstruct the Jerusalem of the Passion in the minds of the audience was central to both Dandini's and Nadal's projects.<sup>74</sup> This forced the exercitant to pay particular attention to the conveyed spiritual message of the image, not solely the image's form. This is a reflection both of Ignatian spirituality as well as Dandini's intended goal of breaking down the barriers between historical realities and Christian universalism.<sup>75</sup>

What is most pronounced in these descriptions is the role non-Catholics played in the maintenance of holy sites. Even though Dandini performed Mass upon the stone that covered Jesus' tomb that was located the house of Caiaphas (the Roman-appointed high Jewish priest who had a major role in the arrest and execution of Jesus), he also relayed that the house was under the guardianship of the Armenians and open to all Christians.<sup>76</sup> While Dandini certainly felt that Rome should be the driving force in the move toward a universal Christianity, this level of cooperation demonstrated that Christian ecumenism, and even the ideal of a universal faith and its spread to the Christian Orient, hinged upon collaboration. Salazar's and Dandini's efforts to Christianize urban space resulted in the creation of an urban cosmopolitanism that potentially unhinged the notion of a universal Catholic Church. The image of the urban Levant that they

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<sup>74</sup> Bernard Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la réforme catholique*, 213-214.

<sup>75</sup> Gauvin Alexander Bailey, "Jesuit Art Patronage Before 1580," in McCoog, ed., *The Mercurian Project*, 763-765.

<sup>76</sup> Dandini, *Missione apostolica*, 153. "andammo dunque con sollecito passo senza punto fermarci dirittamente alla Casa di Caifa per ivi celebrare la Santa Messa sopra la pietra, che chiuse la porta del Santo Sepulchro, e che dagli increduli, & ostinati Giudei fù segnata con sigillo, quando vi giacque il morto Signore."

relayed was not always an accurate portrayal of life in Ottoman urban centers. The idea of urban Christian ecumenism would only fail if the Christian Orient were seen as a subset of the Ottoman world. By separating it from rather than weaving Christian sites and peoples into the world of their Muslim neighbors, they emphasized instead the idea of a Christian commonwealth in opposition to Ottoman tyranny.

Salazar and Dandini then took this a step further when they investigated the various holy sites of the Levant. For them, it was in the communal need to share holy space where the true universal faith could be found. As space was limited and the Turks hindered church building, various Christian sects often had to set aside their differences and share religious buildings and lands. While this in no way belied the prejudices and differences that the sects held, Salazar explained that the division of ecumenical space created a means by which Christian groups bonded in the face of their Ottoman enemies. In the Church of Saint James, roughly three miles south of Tripoli, Greeks and Latins collaborated to preserve their respective rites of Christian burial. Despite being technically Greek in style and rite, “there is the [funerary] chapel for saying the mass in Latin, so that this church is used by Franks, in order that they can bury their dead in it.”<sup>77</sup> As there was minimal room for cemeteries and both sects feared that bandits would vandalize their graves, Greeks and Latins buried their dead in close proximity to one another in order to protect the dead from the infidel. Likewise, the Church of Our Lady of the Oranges, about four miles from Tripoli, was constructed so that “the Greek half is for the Greeks, and the other half is Latin for the Franks; in the Greek half there is an image of the Madonna in the

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<sup>77</sup> MPOIII.150. “In la nella stessa montagna visitammo la chiesa di S. Giacomo; questa se bene ha la forma anche alla greca. Mà vi è la capella per dir la messa alla Latina, perciò che questa chiesa è fatta dalli franchi, acciò possano sepelir in essa li loro morti, si per la usanza del paese dove tutti si Turchi come Hebrei et altri, hanno gli sepulchri fuori della città o della terra, si anche per divotione delli franchi per poter sepelirsi in terra santa, come comunemente si dice, il che vien inteso o per essere discosti dalli infideli, ovvero (secondo che un franco assai pratico et honorato mi disse) per che hanno fatto portar della terra santa in quell luogo per pouter dir che si sepeliscono in terra santa. Detta chiesa è in poter di religiosi greci, che chiamano caloieri, assai poveri; come pur la chiesa e la loro casa tutto è povero.”

Greek style, beautiful but covered, with a lamp nearby.”<sup>78</sup> Here, space was equally shared, albeit divided, showing that despite differences in liturgy, efforts were made to preserve each other’s respective rituals in the face of external pressures. Additionally, the description of the Greek half, but not of the Latin, suggests that Salazar wanted to praise the Greeks for their devotion to the Virgin, making them appear in some sense Catholic. In these two cases, Salazar pointed out how Christian brotherhood won out over theological or ecclesiological difference; if the Latins and Greeks could worship and die together, there should be no reason for disunity.<sup>79</sup>

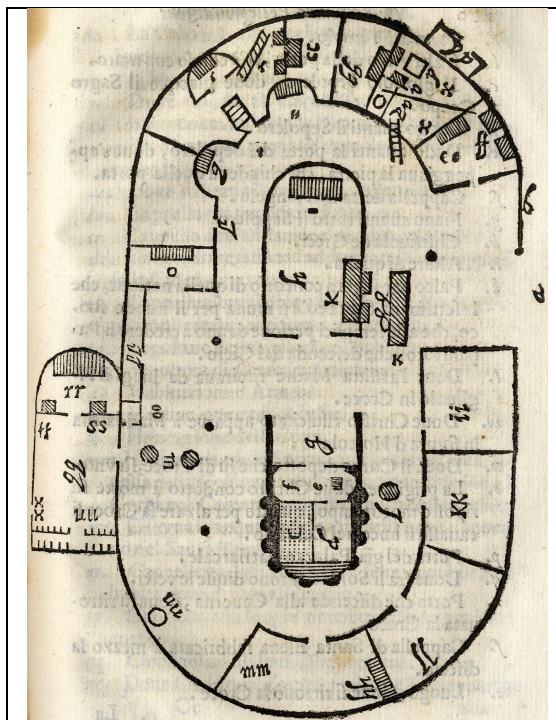


Figure 3. Girolamo Dandini, “Descrizione del Tempio del Santo Sepolcro,” *Missione apostolica* (1656)

Perhaps no church demonstrated this need to share devotional space better than the Church of the Holy Sepulchre [Figure 3]. Venerated for being built upon Golgotha (the place of the crucifixion) as well as possessing the tomb of Christ, the church is the holiest site for all Christians. After his physical description of the building as well as an account of the various relics within it, Dandini provided a visual schematic of the building with a detailed key pointing out the main places within the church. As the plan shows, the church’s ecumenical spaces were

divided amongst the sects. The spaces for each were connected via the central part of the church.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 153. “La chiesa, che hó detto, è divisa: la metà alla greca per gli greci, e l’altra metà alla Latina per gli franchi; in quella delli greci ci è la imagine della madona alla greca, bella però coperta con un velo, e appresso vi è una lampada.”

<sup>79</sup> For more on shared religious space and the epistemological and logistical issues that come with it, cf. Daniela Hacke, “Church, Space and Conflict: Religious Co-Existence and Political Communication in Seventeenth-Century Switzerland,” *German History* 25 (2007), 285-312; Benjamin Kaplan, “Fictions of Privacy: House Chapels and the Spatial Accommodation of Religious Dissent,” *American Historical Review* 107/4 (2002), 1031-64. For an excellent piece on burial practices and confessional conflict as a result of defining right practice, cf. Keith P. Luria, “Separated by Death? Burials, Cemeteries, and Confessional Boundaries in Seventeenth-Century France,” *French Historical Studies* 24 (2001), 185-222.

The corresponding descriptions for letters *ii* through *oo* explain that these are the habitations of the Armenians (*ii*), the Abyssinians (*kk*), the Copts (*ll*), the Syriac Orthodox (*mm*), and the Nestorians (*oo*).<sup>80</sup> Likewise, in the center of the complex was the Greeks' chiesola (*h*). And physically outside of the church itself and on the opposite side of the church from the Oriental Orthodox chapels, with the tomb of Jesus (*c-g*) between them, was the Capuchins' chiesola (*qq*). Containing within it the column upon which Christ was flagellated (*ss*) and a piece of the True Cross (*tt*), the Franciscan chapel held quite important relics of the building, giving it primary status. And as the self-proclaimed guardians of the Holy Land, financed by the Holy See, the Capuchin order (and thus the Catholic Church) saw itself as the most influential within the confines of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.<sup>81</sup> But with the exception of the column of the flagellation and the piece of the True Cross, the most important elements of the Passion found in the church remained ecumenical. The tomb of Christ (*c*), the spot whence Mary cried over the crucified Christ (*l*), where Christ, disguised as a gardener, appeared to Mary Magdalene (*m*), the place where the Christ was adorned with the crown of thorns (*u*), and the place of the crucifixion (*x* and *y*) were all located within shared spaces of the church. Of course, none of this negated Dandini's belief in the truth of Catholicism, or that the other sects did not possess heretical beliefs. But Dandini saw the Holy Sepulchre as a demonstration of the deep devotion to Christ found in the Christian Orient. Rather than seeing the non-Catholic sects as purely apostatized heretics in need of correcting, it should be through the depth of their piety that a Christian universalism could take place.

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<sup>80</sup> Dandini, *Missione apostolica*, 199-201. *nn* is a water cistern shared by the various custodians of the chapels and relics.

<sup>81</sup> For more on the guardianship of the holy sites and the role of the Capuchins as well as the Jesuits in their preservation and importance in the early modern Catholic consciousness, cf. Bernard Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la réforme catholique*, 215-223.

Salazar's and Dandini's physical descriptions of the Holy Land are laden with a desire to present tangible views of a unified Christian Orient connected to the Catholic world through the importance of sites visited. By presenting to the reader a Jerusalem of timeless Christian piety or by exploring the rusticity of ancient Christian devotion in the mountains of Lebanon, the travel narratives create a topography of the Christian Orient that became linked to the Catholic perception of the Holy Land as a place where salvation is universalized through meditation on the life of Christ. True, the lack of Catholic control of these sites, or at best the necessity to share it with others, meant that the type of spatial universality that Rome desired did not, and could not, exist. But Salazar and Dandini nevertheless demonstrated that, even if the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was a divided space and the Turks restricted access to certain places, the Holy Land remained the true center of Christian devotion. And Salazar and Dandini lauded the preservation of the antiquity of faith found in the places of devotion in the Christian Orient. Even if questions of theology would always be central to the early modern Catholic salvific mission, the geographic ecumenism exposed in these two texts perhaps could allow a universal Catholic Church to find room for devotional difference.

## **Conclusions**

Diego de Salazar and Girolamo Dandini presented a Christian Orient that was not entirely foreign in relation to the Catholic world. While the purpose of their travels were different – Salazar on pilgrimage in the name of the Spanish crown and Dandini charged with overseeing a Maronite synod – the result of their respective voyages was the same. Both attempted to correct a dissonance between what was expected from a Christian Orient that *should* be Catholic and the Christian Orient they discovered, a Christian Orient that was an aspect of, and never independent

from, the Muslim-Ottoman world in which it existed. The effort to do this hinged upon the supposition that a distinction could be made between the Christian Orient and the Ottoman Empire; if the Turks could be rendered different enough, then the Christians of the Ottoman world would appear to be less like their neighbors and therefore more like their Catholic brethren. The project of ostracizing the Turk that both men undertook distanced Christians from Muslims; they were able to expose how un-European and how quintessentially un-Catholic Muslims were both in terms of religion and cultural practice.

The second step was to present the Christians of the Ottoman Empire as less like their Turkish rulers and more in line with the image of what was expected of devout Christians. Efforts to display the asceticism of the Maronite monks or celebrate the antiquity of Eastern and Oriental devotion presented Christianity as a faith unified in piety, not divided by theology. While many evaluations of Eastern and Oriental Christians resulted in a Turkification of the Christian Orient, Salazar and Dandini nevertheless believed that pairing the righteousness of Catholicism with Eastern/Oriental piety could result in a universal Christianity that, while polyvalent and nuanced on the most elemental levels, was inherently orthodox. While surely it would be Rome in the lead of this (neither writer thought otherwise), the integration of the respective sects' peculiar traditions into the universal Church did not have to be paradoxical.

The final element, the ecumenization of Christian space, strove to render the Holy Land timeless to provide the audience an image of devotion distributed equally and uniformly between Christians; such important elements of the faith as veneration of the tomb of Christ were divvied up amongst all Christians in a uniquely ecumenical manner. While small gradations between sharing and dividing could be parsed out of this, the various sects shared images and objects of mutual importance. Surely, this in no way removed senses of difference and, more importantly,



disagreements over what it meant to be Christian. Despite this, larger issues of primacy and theology mattered little during the everyday practice of venerating sacred relics. And centuries-old differences over matters of faith seemed insignificant when one simply needed to bury the dead.

Of course, integrating Eastern and Oriental particulars into the idea of universal Catholicism was more problematic than simply sharing space. Even Salazar and Dandini would have admitted that much. But this was perhaps a place to start. Rather than forcing Catholicism, both men believed that through cooperation, Catholicization of the Christian Orient would be most successful. The cultural continuum presented in these works demonstrates that the idea of Catholicism being on the correct side of an either-or binary diametrically opposed by the enemies of the true faith was too rigid for missionary work to succeed. Rather than attempting to make early modern Catholicism into the type of global faith with Rome attempting to remove all difference, some, like Salazar and Dandini, were beginning to recognize that rationalizing difference and, sometimes, accepting it, was more effective. While not the first to come to this conclusion (Elcano's letters tell much about beliefs in compromise), these texts are among the first to explicate a way through which Catholic universalism and Christian particularism did not need to be mutually exclusive.

In both cases, the effort to explore the Christian Orient in familiar terms was a part of their desire to fulfill their respective goals as defenders of the faith. For this reason, these texts should be seen both as travel narratives and as reflective of the apostolic goals of the Society of Jesus and of Jesuit spirituality more generally. And this is where contemporary works such as Botero's *Relationi Universali* and Nadal's *Adnotationes* come into play. If one solely read these texts in isolation, one would lose sight of the fact that they were the products of a larger project

of the universalizing goals of the Catholic Church. Just as Giovanni Battista Eliano attempted to promote himself as a dedicated Catholic willing to die for the faith, and just as Giovanni Botero attempted to present a world in need of Rome as its shepherd, Salazar and Dandini wrote their respective texts not solely as passive observers of things foreign. The purposes for their presence in the Ottoman Empire reified them as active participants in the preservation of the differences and similarities that they evaluated. But the difference lies in how they saw it best to push for Catholicization: through preserving the differences that they observed, not destroying them, Rome could expand its influence in the Christian Orient.

Every line of appraisal and every effort to minimize profound differences between themselves and Eastern and Oriental Christians ran contrary to the prevailing sense of how Catholicism could achieve universal, global status. The affirmation of rigid distinctions between themselves and others was not, for them, an obstacle preventing the ultimate goal of saving the souls of the world. That the Maronites were more culturally like the Turks did not mean that they were just a heretical, schismatic subset of Christians lost but within the reach of the Catholic Church. This, of course, challenged the idea of Catholicism as a religio-cultural universal and problematized the idea of religion as a marker of cultural difference. It recalibrated the notion that to be Christian (or even Catholic in the case of the Maronites) meant to be European; now, one could *be* Christian but *seem* Turk. Rather than rendering the Christian Orient something that simply had to be rescued from barbarity and sexual license (although that needed to happen, of course), it was one that was only a bit different but still potentially, though clearly not yet, orthodox. The anthropological result of Salazar's and Dandini's projects is the reaffirmation of the Christian Orient as an equal participant in the collaborative construction of Christian universalism, even if leaders within the Catholic Church would not have wanted to admit it.

Through their explorations, Salazar and Dandini created textual proof that the goals of the Catholic hierarchy did not need to include the complete Latinization of the Christian Orient in order to Catholicize it. Each evaluation deconstructed the idea of a Christian universalism grounded in pure uniformity and recast it as a process of developing an equilibrium of differences that, combined, provided the best means to put Rome at the center of Christianity.

## + Chapter Six +

### **The Jesuits and the Christian Orient during the Generalate of Mutio Vitelleschi (1615-1645)**

...it is necessary that we entrust ourselves to the Lord, and that you think hard [about the matter] because those who are sent to the Indies must have it at heart to sacrifice themselves completely to God, even in their own blood when that occasion may come, and to not think of a return here...<sup>1</sup>

– Mutio Vitelleschi to Giuseppe Pomo, novice (2 May 1624)

Born just months after the first mission to the Coptic Orthodox Church failed in 1563, Mutio Vitelleschi, the sixth father general of the Society of Jesus and the first not to be born a subject of the King of Spain, came of age during the earliest decades of the Society. In particular, he was immersed in the Society's efforts to spread its influence through its educational efforts. Despite protests from his Roman noble family that wished he follow the lead of numerous Vitelleschi who preceded him by entering into the high-ranking Italian episcopacy, Mutio instead opted to enter the Society of Jesus on 15 August 1583 at nineteen years of age. He engaged with the Christian Orient almost immediately, as he began a career as professor at the Collegio Romano in 1588. For the better part of fifteen years, he taught the students of the Maronite College subjects ranging from logic to scripture to Scholastic theology. He briefly served as rector of the English College in Rome, and then held the same post at the college in Naples. He returned to Rome in 1606 as rector of the Collegio Romano. Then, after several years of administrative posts under Father General Claudio Acquaviva, he was elected Superior General of the Society of Jesus on 15 November 1615.

Much of Acquaviva's generalate laid the groundwork for Vitelleschi's, which lasted for thirty years, until his death in 1645. Vitelleschi pushed for the expansion of Jesuit colleges,

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<sup>1</sup> ARSI, *Sic. 8 II*, f. 497v./MPOV.31. "Et però prima di prenderla è necessario che ci raccomandiamo al Signore, e che voi pensiate molto bene perché quelli che si mandano all'Indie, devono haver animo di sagrificarsi in tutto a Dio benedetto, et nel proprio sangue quando venisse l'occasione, e di non pensare al ritorno in queste parti."

seminaries, and residences, which had been the hallmark of the Society under Acquaviva. Vitelleschi's generalate also initiated a period of exponential growth for the Society. First, by the 1620s, the first generation of Jesuits had passed on, and cults in their name sprung up wherever they had left their marks. This provided the Society with a past generation that set an ideal model for the swell of new novices to emulate. Vitelleschi oversaw the canonization of Ignatius Loyola in 1626, as well as the beatifications of Louis Gonzaga, Francis Borgia, and the martyrs of Japan. Missionary activity also exploded under Vitelleschi. New missions to Tibet, China, Angola, Canada, and Maryland showed the breadth of the Jesuits' reach. And the expansion of old missions to New Spain and Goa showed that the Jesuits' roots stayed firm where they had already laid them down. Activities within Europe grew as well, and church construction, such as the new Church of Saint Ignatius in Rome – built to commemorate Ignatius's canonization – demonstrated the extent to which the Society had expanded. At Vitelleschi's death in 1645, there were over 16,000 Jesuits who manned 521 colleges, 49 seminaries, and more than 360 residences worldwide.<sup>2</sup>

But all this does not suggest that the Society under Vitelleschi did not face obstacles. Coinciding with Vitelleschi's generalate was the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), which tore apart central Europe, one of the Jesuits' main missionary theatres. It exposed the social tensions caused by the Protestant and Catholic Reformations, as well as the growing political strife between princes and their subjects.<sup>3</sup> The war involved every power of Europe in one form or another (including the Ottoman Empire), and resulted in nearly eight million casualties, over

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<sup>2</sup> MPOIII.357.

<sup>3</sup> For more on the Thirty Years' War and its impact on German society as well as its root causes, cf. Thomas A Brady, *German Histories in the Age of Reformations, 1400-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Cf. also Geoffrey Parker and Simon Adams, *The Thirty Years' War* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984); Peter H. Wilson, *The Thirty Years War: Europe's Tragedy* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009).

one-third of the population of the Holy Roman Empire. The German countryside was in ruins, afflicted by plague, famine, and desolation. Some cities, such as Magdeburg in Saxony, were completely destroyed.<sup>4</sup> The war exposed for Vitelleschi the problems of governing a large, multi-national organization whose members had political as well as personal interests that did not always conform with the official stance of the Society.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, Vitelleschi saw it as his duty to unify the mission of the Society and to push it forward in its effort to save souls. He was forced to navigate the difficult questions of loyalty and political allegiance, and to see how factors such as the relative cooperation of Europe's Catholic monarchs impacted the success of the Society. Calling new missions as well as continuing the successes of old ones was less a question of finding skilled evangelizers as it was about navigating the mounting religio-political tensions of the early seventeenth century that culminated in a tragic thirty-year slaughter. These tensions manifested themselves in the Jesuits' efforts in the Christian Orient as well. During his generalate, Vitelleschi had to navigate how best to further the Society's work with the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Christians while at the same time keeping at bay pressures that came from the leaders of war-torn Europe, not to mention the usual problems of missionizing in the Ottoman Empire.

These larger geo-political quandaries radically altered how the Jesuits proceeded in the Christian Orient. In the sixteenth century, the Jesuits had been papal legates. But as the papacy had come to be more closely aligned with the Ottomans' great rival, the Hapsburgs, it was no longer viable; anyone associated with the Hapsburgs for any reason was viewed with great

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<sup>4</sup> Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 568. In 1631, after breaking the siege, imperial troops and the Catholic League stormed Magdeburg, a Protestant stronghold of 30,000 citizens. It is estimated that in the slaughter that followed, no more than 5,000 survived.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Bireley, *The Jesuits and the Thirty Years War: Kings, Courts, and Confessors* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

suspicion in Ottoman lands.<sup>6</sup> And this, along with the Thirty Years' War, strengthened the alliance between the Holy Roman Empire and Spain's two natural rivals, the Ottomans and the French.<sup>7</sup> While France did not directly involve itself in the Thirty Years' War before 1630, its alliance with the Ottomans and opposition to the Hapsburgs meant that if the Jesuits sought to gain a foothold in Ottoman lands, they would have to distance themselves in some way from their traditional patrons, the Hapsburgs and the papacy, and ally themselves with the French. For a religious order that made a vow of obedience to the pope and was founded by "seven Spanish devils," as the nineteenth-century English historian John Addington Symonds so eloquently put it, this was quite the change.<sup>8</sup>

And Vitelleschi was forced to weigh these exigencies and pressures against the reality of the state of the Christian Orient. As not much had changed since the days of Eliano, the Copts and Jacobites were still resistant, and there was always someone looking to undermine the Jesuits' efforts for one reason or another, the desire to save souls in the Christian Orient remained no small task. The tensions that Vitelleschi faced show that, despite the efforts of some (Eliano, Dandini, Carafa), the gap between winning the Christian Orient and where the Jesuits actually stood in that effort was still quite wide indeed. And Vitelleschi spent the whole of thirty years wrestling with this reality.

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<sup>6</sup> Thomas Dandeleit, *Spanish Rome*.

<sup>7</sup> For the sixteenth-century roots of this alliance, cf. Christine Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2011). For its later developments and pressures it put on French society, cf. McCabe, *Orientalism in Early Modern France*.

<sup>8</sup> John Addington Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy: The Catholic Reaction, volume 1* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1886), 65.

## Vitelleschi and the Maronite College

Under Claudio Acquaviva, the bonds between the Jesuits and the Maronites had become much stronger due to the growth of the Maronite College. Regular communication between the Jesuit curia and Lebanon had increased after Dandini's departure in 1597, and continued throughout the remainder of Acquaviva's generalate. Between 1597 and his death in 1615, Acquaviva had forged a personal correspondence with patriarchs Yusuf ar-Ruzzy (r. 1597-1608) and Yuhanna Mahluf (r. 1608-1633) that hinged upon the Society's continual efforts to foster the success of the Maronite College. But this correspondence also demonstrated that, despite the Jesuits efforts, the relationship between Rome and Qannubin was still in part defined by the pressures of the Turks. Patriarch Yuhanna explained to Acquaviva on 2 October 1614 that "we are in grave distress because of the oppression and war that exist in our land." Yuhanna felt that the community was in a state of crisis, and requested that the Maronites in Rome return to Lebanon as soon as they were fully trained even if they did not want to return, as their presence was needed as soon as possible.<sup>9</sup> However, the pressures put on the Maronites were not simply the result of Turkish oppression; the whole empire was in a state of crisis, as the turn of the sixteenth century and the first two decades of the seventeenth century were none too kind to the Ottoman state. First, a series of rebellions linked to certain nobles attempting to acquire tax privileges known as the Jalali revolts struck much of Anatolia from 1596 to 1610. Suppressing the Jalali cost the Ottoman Empire a fortune in money, men, and land. And a fifteen-year war with the Persian Safavid Empire broke out in 1603. Between 1596 and 1618, Anatolia, the

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<sup>9</sup> ARSI, *Fondo Gesuitico 100*, f. 652v./MPOIII.240. "Et si Vostra Paternità domanderà del nostro stato, noi per la gratia del Signore in quanto al corpo stiamo bene, et speriamo da Dio che così lei stia. Ma stiamo in gran travaglio per l'oppressioni e guerre che ci sono nel nostro paese. Ci è venuta nuova che ci sono Alievi del nostro Collegio che hanno finito i loro studii et non vogliono ritornare. Questa non è nostra volontà, né il fine per il quale è stato fatto il Collegio; ma conviene loro ritornare ad insegnare nel loro paese le virtù et l'altre scienze che hanno aquisite nel Collegio." Italian translation of Karshuni original. Translator unknown.



Levant, and the northeastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire were almost continually engulfed in war and famine. As a result, much of these territories was in ruins, and Ottoman officials were forced to tax their subjects in order to pay for the costs of the Jalali revolts and the Safavid war.<sup>10</sup> Religious minorities and the poorest communities were hit hardest by this new reality. The Maronites, as both poor and *dhimmi*, suffered especially.

This was how Vitelleschi found the Maronites when he became father general in November 1615. But Vitelleschi strove to continue the work he had begun as a professor by supporting the Maronite College. He explained to Yuhanna that “God communicates to me to see to it that [the college] prospers for His greater glory,” and that he was also pleased to relay that, above all, the preparation of texts for the Maronites was progressing well. This was to help them move toward eradicating the ignorance that plagued the community.<sup>11</sup> He explained this as well to Georges ‘Amira, archbishop of Ehden and alumnus of the Maronite College, who had written to him in May 1616. While ‘Amira’s letter is now lost, Vitelleschi’s reply that he desired to help in assisting the Maronites’ difficult financial situation as best he can shows that ‘Amira was concerned with the Maronites’ poverty, as new economic realities had put more stress on the already poor community. However, Vitelleschi did not elaborate on how he planned to alleviate the crisis, showing an insecurity with how best to deal directly with the Maronites in the midst of the turmoil in the Ottoman Empire. He was able, however, to address issues surrounding the college more directly. As one of its original students, and possibly a pupil of Vitelleschi himself, ‘Amira took special interest in the college, and Vitelleschi made sure to keep him informed. He

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<sup>10</sup> Sam White, *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*.

<sup>11</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN.* 2, f. 153r./MPOIII.295. “Le cose del Collegio penso che non si muterano, però mentre la Compagnia ne haverà il pensiero, sarrano da me promosse al zelo, che Dio mi comunica di vederlo prosperare per maggior gloria sua; e per adesso si è fatto molto per conto della stampa de libri ecclesiastici dalle lingue, ò s’attende al resto... Il Signore però cavarà bene d’ogni cosa come le prego, accio che protegga con speciali favori V.S. Ilma à cui per fine m’offerro prontissimo sempre.”

explained to ‘Amira that he did not plan to alter the course of the college, but rather aimed to strengthen it and its usefulness for the Maronites. And he planned to do this, he explained, “for the affection and inclination that I have in advancing it with all my strength.”<sup>12</sup>

Little had changed by 1618, however. In fact, if anything, the situation was more dire, as problems with book production in Rome prevented Vitelleschi from aiding the Maronites as much as he would have hoped. While printing older books was fine, there was an issue with the breviary of 1592 that was released in conjunction with the new edition of the Vulgate under Clement VIII.<sup>13</sup> The need to revise the original text meant that the printing of an Arabic translation had to wait, yet again. As it was the only means by which Vitelleschi could assist the Maronites at that moment, the problems at press surely frustrated him.<sup>14</sup> He also was not entirely pleased with whom the Maronites had been sending to Rome and how brief these seminarians’ stays were. Vitelleschi explained to the patriarch that “I also wish to request that Your Reverence... proceed with great consideration in the election of the persons that are sent here for the service of your nation.” Vitelleschi explained that many of the youths sent before did not possess the adequate drive and purpose, therefore rendering them unable to serve the needs of community. Likewise, Vitelleschi explained that when the patriarch desired to have seminarians return to Lebanon, he was to write directly to Paul V, who would make the final decision on whether or not the seminarians were ready.<sup>15</sup> These tensions highlight that, despite the

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<sup>12</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 2, f. 153r./MPOIII.296. “In torno all Collegio, penso che non vi sarà alteratione alcuna, però mentre starà a carico della Compagnia, spero che starà in modo che non si possi desiderare sodisfatione, per l’affetione et inclinatione che ho di promoverlo con tutte le mie forze. Del resto, V.S.Rma dimanda cosa difficile in material di havere qualche pensione, ma non per questo lascerò di fare diligenza, e di rappresentare à Nostro Signore le sue necessità. Piaccia alla Maestà Divina di dare bon’esito alla dimanda, come io desiderio in stremo, per consolatione di V.S.Rma à cui m’offerò con tutto l’animo et prego per fine da Dio il colmo de suoi beni.”

<sup>13</sup> Nasser Gemayel, *Les échanges culturels entre les maronites et l’Europe*, Vol. I 72-81, Vol II. 639-642.

<sup>14</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 2, f. 168rv./MPOIII.297-298.

<sup>15</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 2, f. 168v./MPOIII.299-300. “Ne potrà essere anche bene che quando V.S.Rma scrive a Sua Santità e al Cardinale Protettore la supplichi à favorire il ritorno di quei che finiscono li studi per aiuto della Natione. Et io ancora, in questo et in tutto quello che potrà aversi da me, mi troverò prontissimo sempre... Voglio

Maronites' collaboration with Rome, the process of Latinization was more complicated than originally perceived under Gregory XIII. While the professors in Rome who taught the Maronites were some of the best in the world, instruction would only go as far as the quality of students sent. But the need to force the Maronites to regulate who was sent and who was recalled shows that the community was perhaps not as strict as Rome would have liked it to be when it came to choosing its future leaders, despite their strong desire to reform. Furthermore, while the Arabic printing press that was initiated under Eliano and Carafa was working, the cumbersome textual corrections that needed to take place before the books themselves could be translated prevented the Maronite College's alumni from disseminating the teachings of the faith to the Maronites; without books, there could be no instruction. This was hardly a well-oiled Catholicizing machine.

By 1620, matters had changed very little, and Vitelleschi was continually explaining why he was unable to assist the Maronites. He relayed to Yuhanna that the recently-arrived youths had settled into their studies, and that he and others would see to their wellbeing.<sup>16</sup> However, the breviary had still not been released. Vitelleschi lamented to 'Amira:

I cannot hide the gravity that I feel, with seeing that the Maronites are worried about the breviary being sent, and there is little hope of pulling it off in the end; and what is worse is that it seems that they want to place the blame on the Society, with little care for the truth, without seeing the affection with which the Society embraces matters that involve the Maronites.<sup>17</sup>

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anche pregare V.S.Rma à voler, con la sua autorità appresso Mon.re Patriarca, operare che si proceda con molta consideratione nell'elettione delle persone che si mandano qui per servizio della Natione, perchè altrimenti si fa più presto danno, e quelli che sono stati quà altre volte, non sono molte volte a proposito. Questo è un punto di grande importanza, e però m'è parso di raccomandarlo quanto più efficacemente questo, alla molta prudenza di V.S.Rma."

<sup>16</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 2, f. 189v./MPOIII.305-306 "Vennero li putti sotto la condotta di D. Gio Battista Corti sani per gratia del Signore, et habbi con tale occasione la lettera di V.S.Illm de 1° di settembre del anno passato. E questa è la prima commodità che s'offerisce di rispondere. Li putti stanno bene et allegri, e sono trattati dal P. Rettore con affetto di amorevolissima Madre; ne io manco di raccomandarglieli col Collegio, per l'amor che porto alla Natione, e per il desiderio vivo che hò di far gratia à V.S.Illma."

<sup>17</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 2, f. 190r./MPOIII.307. "non posso però nascondere il grave dello che sento, con vedere che l'istessi maroniti si alarmino alla spedizione del brevario, e già ne è poca speranza di tirarlo a fine; e quello

Vitelleschi must have felt powerless. He wanted nothing more than to provide for the spiritual needs of the Maronites. But his hands were tied. To make matters worse, the Maronites blamed him and the Jesuits. Vitelleschi found himself defending the Society, such as in August 1621, when he sent off letters to Yuhanna and ‘Amira, imploring them to have faith in his desire to help the Maronites. He told the patriarch that he had repeatedly demonstrated his love for the Maronites and his desire to serve the community through work with the college, and that he would continue to do so with all his might. Vitelleschi beseeched him not to lose faith in him, the college, and the breviary that would eventually arrive.<sup>18</sup> His letter to ‘Amira stressed the same desperation. He explained to the archbishop that “the unhappy result of the breviary has displeased me more than you may think,” as the whole fiasco surrounding the Jesuits’ emphasis of the breviary’s necessity coupled by the Society’s inability to provide it rested solely on Vitelleschi’s shoulders.<sup>19</sup> Vitelleschi asked ‘Amira to believe that the issues surrounding the breviary were not his fault, and that he was doing everything he could to help the Maronites both in Rome and in Lebanon.<sup>20</sup>

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che è peggio pare che vogliono addossare la colpa alla Compagnia, poco curandosi della verità, e non guardando all’affetto col quale la Compagnia abbraccia le cos toccanti alla Nazione.”

<sup>18</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 2, f. 192v./MPOIII.316. “Più volte ho procurato di persuader à V.S.Illma acciò mi facesse gratia di credere che li negoti della Nazione et del Collegio mi sono à cuore quanto ella può pensare, et ho procurato, e procurarò di condor avanti à tutto poter mio... Supplico V.S.Illma à non prestar loro fede in quello che tocca al servitio della Nazione, et al Brevario, perché nel cospetto divino l’assicuro del contrario, e desidero che mi creda che le cose del suo servitio mi premono grandemente, come quelle del Collegio, nel quale posso dire che si stà adesso con quiete, e si vive bene per gratia del Signore...”

<sup>19</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 2, f. 192v./MPOIII.316-317. “L’infelice riuscita del Brevario mi è dispiaciuta più di quello che Lei può pensare, perché si habbiamo faticato molto, e Nostro Signore hà con molta benignità somministrata grossa spesa; e quando credevam essere in fine, ci habbiamo trovato guasto il negotio, da chi era più obligato à mandarlo avanti: adesso procurano di scolparsi, et addossare la colpa alla Compagnia.”

<sup>20</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 2, f. 192v./MPOIII.317.” Io supplico Mon.re Patriarca, che mi faccia gratia di non prestar fede ad alcuno che scrivesse cosa in contrario, e desidero che anco V.S.Illma mi favorisca di credere quanto ho detto, e d’esser sicura che non mi possono le cose della Nazione e del Collegio premere più quello che mi premono e procuro di promoverle à tutto poter mio.”

But what could Vitelleschi do? The reality was, very little. The problem was that the Maronite leaders were not simply passive recipients of Latinization. They wanted Rome's help, and when they did not receive what was promised to them, they were tremendously displeased. Their discontent increased when rumors spread to the patriarch and to 'Amira that the Jesuits had remarked negatively upon the Maronites' faith. As the Maronites considered themselves to be good Catholics, hearing that their supposed patrons and spiritual kin had spoken disapprovingly of their rites and practices struck a nerve, with 'Amira especially. 'Amira was chiefly disappointed with some of the content of the Maronite College's *Litterae annuae*, which gave summaries of the progress of the Maronite seminarians over the course of the previous year. Vitelleschi swore to 'Amira that the *Litterae annuae* was privy only to members of the Society, and that its contents were not aimed to offend the Maronites, but simply to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of students; its goal was to point to any heresies or errors that might have crept up, in order that the Jesuit instructors at the college could eliminate them. He also explained that, if one read Jesuit writings on the Maronites, one would see the great praise and the high esteem in which the Maronites were held.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless the rumors kept swirling. By August 1622, it was not just the *Litterae annuae* that offended the Maronite leaders. Despite his letters explaining the contrary, Vitelleschi again had to defend the Society against accusations that it was behind the delay in printing. He begged Yuhanna not to listen to the reports, and to have faith in him that the breviary would be

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<sup>21</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 2, f. 231r./MPOIII.325. "Le nostre Lettere Annue non si leggono fuori della Compagnia et in esse non si vede cosa che debbe offender la Natione, poiche se ben si dice che haveva degli errori non conosciuti, si aggiunge però è inclinatissima a seguir la verità quando segli mostra. Questo stesso si dichiarerà più distesamente nelle nostre Historie che andanno per le mani di tutti, e vedranno le lodi che diciamo della Natione, e la stima che ne facciamo, come in effetto è molta, et io veramente desidero di servirla a tutto poter mio, e particolarmente V.S.Rma à cui fò col fine humil reverenza. Alla quale aggiungo che io non ho visti gli annali, et penso che non vi sia cosa che debba offendere."

released soon.<sup>22</sup> But the Patriarch was skeptical whether or not the breviary would ever arrive, and Vitelleschi could tell that the Maronites were growing tired of waiting.

There were other problems as well. There were allegations that the Jesuits were disparaging the Maronites beyond the *Litterae annuae*. Vitelleschi explained to ‘Amira that neither the Jesuits nor anyone else in Rome had said anything negatively about the spiritual life of the Maronites, and that the Jesuits would seek to rebuke any off-putting or reproachful opinions.<sup>23</sup> He also sought to quash rumors that the students at the Maronite College were ill-treated, as he explained that “weekly I take account of the direction of the college and the treatment of the pupils,” and he saw to it personally that they were treated well. And he also reassured ‘Amira that the breviary was in the works and that its completion was not as far off as the Maronites believed. Despite whisperings to the contrary, Cardinal Protector Alessandro Orsini was working to alleviate tensions and to ensure that the Maronites received Rome’s fullest support. And he assured them that the breviary that their previous benefactor Filippo Boncompagni (1548-1586, cardinal and nephew of Gregory XIII) had promised them in the 1580s would arrive in due course; but that promise was nearly forty years old.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 2, f. 234r./MPOIII.326. “Io costretto cio hò tanta premura delli negotii della Natione che guardando al servitio di Dio e di V.S.Illma non mi stancarò di adoprarli in tirarli avanti, non ostante questi rumori et falsità, che si spargono senza ragione e di servir la Natione à tutto poter mio, in tutte le occorenze, come si fa adesso intorno al Breviario, qualè sta in fine.”

<sup>23</sup> ARSI, *Epp. NN* 2, f. 234v./MPOIII.327. “Dico ingenuamente, nel cospetto divino, che so Mons<sup>re</sup> Patriarca et V.S.Rma danno credito à quello che di qua scrivono persone sperimentate turbolenti e più attente al proprio interesse, che al bene della Natione le cascandiranno sempre peggiorando con danno irreparabile.”

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., “Adesso anzi n’è male niuno in Collegio, et le cose vanno come prima, et io posso saperlo, perche ogni settimana piglio conto del governo del Collegio et del trattamento degli alunni, e per l’effetto cordiale che porto alla Natione mai mi stancarò di servirla e di promuovere i suoi negotii, come si fa adesso del Breviario che stà in fine, per gratia del Signore. Tra gli altri danni che dette persone con la loro inquietudine hanno cagionati, uno è questo che mi dispiace sumamente. Haveva il S<sup>r</sup> Cardinal Boncompagno, nipote di Gregorio XIII tanto benefattore della Natione lasciato comprotettore dal S<sup>r</sup> Cardinal Orsino Protettore, annunciati varii negotii di molta utilità, et havea havuta da N.S<sup>re</sup> intentione di buona limosina per far paramenti sacerdoti e mandar costà, e si è poi ritirato per li sudetti rumori.”

By late 1623, Vitelleschi was still doing little more than promising Rome's dedication to the Maronites with little progress beyond the college. There was still no breviary, and the patriarch and 'Amira were still highly skeptical both of Vitelleschi's ability to lead and of their protectors' ability to provide for them. Vitelleschi was still begging 'Amira to ignore the rumors that the college was not adequately training the Maronites, as "those things have no foundation," and that everything was going well in Rome.<sup>25</sup> 'Amira and Yuhanna were still skeptical, and this impacted whom they sent to Rome. They failed to see why they should send the best students if the education they were receiving was inadequate or was undermining or belittling the Maronites' unique rites and practices. Vitelleschi entreated them to be more diligent in whom they selected, as the success of the college, the spiritual life of the Maronites, and the life of the Church depended on a future generation of shepherds.<sup>26</sup> He expressed this as well to Yuhanna, hoping that he and 'Amira would collaborate to select only the brightest Maronite youths to send to Rome.<sup>27</sup> But with doubts and rumors surrounding the college, and little hope of a breviary ever materializing, there was little incentive for Yuhanna and 'Amira to force anyone to dedicate years of study in Rome if it meant they would not be properly trained or could not properly serve the community. Vitelleschi repeated himself over and over again; but until real results showed,

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<sup>25</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 2, f. 254v./MPOIII.330. "Il Collegio adesso camina assai bene, per gratia del Signore, come V.S.Rma intenderà del P. Rettore. Con tutto ciò dubito che alcuno anche scriverà forse qualche cosa senza fundamento. Se ciò avvenisse, prego V.S.Rma che mi faccia gratia di non darli credito, et de esseremi testimonio appresso il Rmo Patriarca (al quale non tocco niente di questo punto), accio che resti sicuro che le cose non hanno fundamento, e se ne mandarebbe anche fedele informatione quando V.S.Rma la richiedesse."

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. "Prego con tutto l'affetto, la carità e santo zelo di V.S.Rma che vogli attendere alla buona elettione de putti dalla quale dipende la quiete del Collegio, il servitio di cotesta chiesa e anche molto bene di la Natione, et io che l'amo cordialmente li desidero in estremo."

<sup>27</sup> ARSI, *Epp.* NN 2, f. 254v./MPOIII.331 "Supplico con tutto l'animo V.S.Illma che voglia riceverla per sua benignità, et favorirla nell'elettione delli putti, e in quanto sarà necessario per tale spedizione, dipendendo da questa la buona riuscita in servitio di cotesta Chiesa, e di tutta la Natione, e la quiete del Collegio al quale hò cordialissimo affetto, e altro tanto al servitio de V.S.Illma à cui fò humil reverenza, e prego di Dio perpetua copia di gratie."

and until Maronites themselves were no longer displeased, they remained unconvinced. This remained the state of Vitelleschi's relationship with the Maronites throughout his generalate.

### **Jesuit residences in the Levant: fighting enemies and finding friends**

In addition to his efforts to propel the Maronite College forward, Vitelleschi also recognized that if the Christian Orient was ever going to accept Rome's overtures of union, a real Catholic presence in the form of permanent residences would be necessary. Permanent residences gave the Jesuits the opportunity to immerse themselves in the communities of the Christian Orient and establish deep roots in society, something that temporary missions never afforded due to their brevity. Residences in other missionary theatres, such as those in India, the Philippines, and New Spain, had proven to be more effective than the itinerant missionary work that had taken place in the previous decades.<sup>28</sup> While the types of permanent residences that were constructed throughout Europe, Latin America, or Asia, rife with sumptuous churches,<sup>29</sup> could never be realized due to the geo-political restrictions of missionary work in the Ottoman Empire, Vitelleschi saw that the types of cultural immersion that had borne much success could be brought to the urban centers of the Christian Orient. Much like Jesuit colleges and residences in Europe and elsewhere, they were designed to educate locals and integrate them into the faith through immersion in the spiritual and intellectual life of the Society. The residences, in theory, were the perfect means to make more pointed overtures to the Christian Orient. And it seemed that they could be successful, as Vitelleschi was able to garner much support, particularly from the French, in his efforts toward establishing a permanent Jesuit presence in the Levant.

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<sup>28</sup> Nicholas P. Cushner, "Early Jesuit Missionary Methods in the Philippines," *The Americas* 15, no. 4 (April 1, 1959): 361–379; Ines G. Zupanov, *Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-century India* (New Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>29</sup> Robert C. Smith, "Jesuit Buildings in Brazil," *The Art Bulletin* 30, no. 3 (September 1, 1948): 187–213; Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions in Asia and Latin America, 1542-1773*; Chipps Smith, *Sensuous Worship*.



But there were obstacles to these efforts as well. First, the Franciscans had long been the leading Catholic order in the urban centers of the Levant, and were none too keen on the Jesuits infringing upon their territory. Second, Venice always had had a close relationship with the Franciscans dating back to the order's founding in the thirteenth century. And as Paul V had placed the Republic of Venice under interdict in 1606 and the Republic subsequently expelled all Jesuits from its territories, Venice allied itself with the Franciscans against the Jesuits and their French protectors, who Venice saw as their main economic rivals in the Levant.<sup>30</sup> The result was that Vitelleschi was forced to navigate a complex web of diplomatic and political rivalries that problematized the establishment of a Jesuit presence in the Levant.

The idea for a Jesuit residence in Jerusalem was, of course, originally one of Ignatius' visions for the purpose of the Society. However, when that could not be realized, it was put on hold until Acquaviva's generalate, when it was revised by a French Jesuit, François Canillac. Canillac entered the Society in 1593 in Rome, making his final profession in 1609. In 1610, he was in Constantinople, serving as superior of the Jesuit residence in the Ottoman capital.<sup>31</sup> After several years in Constantinople, he wrote to Acquaviva to explain that he and his companion, another French Jesuit named Jérôme Queyrot, were set to depart for Jerusalem to meet with the Greek Patriarch, Theophanes III. Canillac explained that the pair required a letter from Paul V granting them permission to stay in the city in the pope's name. The brief was to convince the

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<sup>30</sup> Giovanni Bissoli, "La Republica di Venezia e la custodia di Terra Santa," in *La custodia di Terra Santa e l'Europa: i rapporti politici e l'attività culturale dei Francescani in Medio Oriente*, edited by Michele Piccirillo (Rome: Il Veltro, 1983), 83-94. Sami Kuri, "Introduction," in Id., *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, vol. 3 (Rome: Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1994), 50\*-54\*. For more on the Venetian Interdict, cf. William Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Kuri's brief biography of Canillac in *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, vol. 3 (Roma: Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1994), 350. For more on the Jesuits in Constantinople around the turn of the seventeenth century, cf. Eric Dursteler, "Education and Identity in Constantinople's Latin Rite Community, c. 1600," *Renaissance Studies* 18, no. 2 (2004): 287-303. Documents pertaining to their presence can be found in Auguste Carayon, ed. *Relations inédites des missions de la Compagnie de Jésus a Constantinople et dans le Levant au XVIIe siècle*. Poitiers, H. Oudin, 1864.

Franciscans that their presence was under the order of the pontiff. It was also to initiate friendship with the friars, lest the Franciscans attempt to undermine the pair's efforts.<sup>32</sup> In a separate letter, Canillac explained that he and Queyrot hoped to establish in Jerusalem a Jesuit presence that would serve the spiritual needs of Christians in the Holy Land seemingly in perpetuity, and that "Father Jérôme and I are leaving [for Jerusalem] with the hope of doing some good" in the name of saving souls.<sup>33</sup>

But word of the Jesuits' plans quickly spread to the Franciscans and Venetians, and tensions between Jesuits and Franciscans manifested themselves almost immediately. On 1 June 1615, Tommaso da Novara, the Franciscan guardian of the Holy Land, lamented to Almore Nani, the Venetian bailo in Constantinople, that Canillac and Queyrot were parading around dressed as Greek clergymen and were accompanying Theophanes as if to make some false impression on him that they were there solely to serve him. He then recounted all the years of tribulations that the friars had endured in the Holy Land in order to maintain the holy in the face of barbarism. He then exclaimed that while "so many poor friars have martyred themselves" in the name of Christ, the Jesuits "had not even yet been thought of in order to come into this

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<sup>32</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 101, ff. 464r-465v./MPOIII.246. "Quod ad peregrinationem nostram attinet, mirum dictum quantum prae se ferat amorem erga nos Patriarca praedictus; bene sentit de fine cupitque vehementer Hierosolymis amicitiam inire cum Patribus illis Sancti Francisci, utinam et illi in eandem conspiret et ipsemet Pontifex signa amicitiae ostendere dignetur. Necessarium erit Breve pro nostris, ut possimus ibi commorari, cum gratis et facultatibus necessariis; sed omnia pro nunc sub sigillo secreti debent namere donec videamus quid nobis ibi positum praestari a nostris cum Graecis illis religiosus. Et certe si nihil aliud praestarent quam Patriarchae amicitiam, et bene affectum erga Ecclesiam Romanam conservare, non esset parvi pendendum. Ego tentabo, volente Dio; et libenter hanc animam sed vitam impendam pro salute harum animarum. Coeterum V. Paternitas hoc opus promovere dignetur quod maxime faciet si his Residentiis nunc aluquem virum prudentem et minime suspectum his partibus praefierat, qui bono tum sociorum tum externorum invigilet et quoniam forte haec erit ultime, si Deus de me in hoc itinere aliter disponat. Deum optimum maximum invoco in testem me in hac parte nihil aliud praetendere quam divinam gloriam."

<sup>33</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 101, f. 469r./MPOIII.247. "Scrivo più alla larga per via del mar alla P.tà V. Molta R.da della vostra partenza col Patriarca de Jerusalem, mandandoli una lettera del Arcivescovo di Chranapoleos importantissima, dove vederà che cosa si può sperare della salute della Chiesa Orientale. La prego fare spedire un Breve per stare gli nostri in Jerusalem con le licentie solite et facultà... Il P. Jeronimo et io partiamo con speranza di fare qualche bene, ò di partire, o beati noi se etc. La nave ci fa pressia, ci ricordiamo humilmente alli suoi santi sacrificii, addimandando la sua santa benedittione." On Jerusalem, cf. Henri Fouquieray, *Histoire de la Compagnie de Jésus en France des origines à la suppression (1528-1762)* Vol. III (Paris: A. Picard et Fils, 1910), 335-340.

world.” This affront to the traditions of the Franciscans by a band of upstarts offended him deeply, and he called for the Venetians to act.<sup>34</sup> Fra Ruffino, Vicar and President of the Holy Land, likewise was troubled by the Jesuits’ presence and pushed for Venice to intervene. After thanking Nani for Venice’s assistance in supporting the friars, Ruffino explained that the Jesuits, in the company of the Greek patriarch, had arrived with great sums of money and were planning to buy up all the holy sites. To make matters worse, it was probably French money, and these Jesuits were clearly agents of the French king, bent on spreading his influence to the detriment of the Franciscans, Venice, and even the faith.<sup>35</sup> Nani, for his part, relayed this message to the Venetian Senate. He explained that Jesuits planned to install themselves in Jerusalem. He explained that they were very ambitious in their efforts, and even planned to weasel their way into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, much to the dismay of the Franciscans.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> ASVe, *Cospoli* F. 79 f. 300rv/MPOIII.249-250. “Ma fra tante calamità mi mancava questo fuoco ancora, come intendo da alcuni luoghi, et ho scoperto qui, che li Padri Gesuiti si sono vestiti da Caloiri, et vanno col Patriarca Greco di Gerusalem a quella volta a tentare una bell impresa. Dio li perdoni so, et haveranno da fare con San Francesco, non con quell povero greggie di Xto; et forse come meritano, potriano tornar confusi. Gran Cosa Ex<sup>mo</sup> Signore, che dopo tante centinaia d’anni che le poveri nostri Padri son stati cola nel fuoco di tanti tribulationi, sotto il crudo battone di questi fieri Barbari, per mantener quei santi luoghi, et lodar così Xto, ove tanto ha per noi patito, quando li Gesuiti non s’eran imaginati di venir al mondo! Tanti poveri frati vi sono morti martiri et li 3 et 4 anni intieri sono stati nell Castello a ceppo et ferri incarcerati, et per non andar lontano, il benedetto defonto guardiano legato nelle carceri più di 4 volte in questi tre anni del suo guardanato, quante ingiurie, quante strappate di Barbari...”

<sup>35</sup> ASVe, *Cospoli* F. 80 f. 182rv/MPOIII.252-253. “Delle persone nostre e di santi luoghi ci ha parlato la raccomandatione di cotesti dal [Re] di Francia, raccomandandoci dei Gesuiti venuti con detto Patriarca, li quali con gran soma de denari, portati con essi loro, trattano contra nostra voglia di star a Gerusalem, con speranza di comprar i santi luoghi; che così viene informato il nostro Drogmano maggiore. Di più habbiamo sospetto che questi danari che portano, l’habbino havuto in Francia, quando detti padri francesi con haver trattato prima con quelle corone, che questi santi luoghi che seno per perdersi dalle nostre mani per essere pieni de debiti, et cio habbiamo inteso da un Caloiro Greco... Ma essi padri sono ricorsi al detto patriarca, pregandolo a volerli vendere un suo luogo, e noi avisati l’habbiamo supplicato che conforme alle lettere di V.S.Illma stamo in tanta pace, perchè in niun modo voglia favoriri costoro in danno nostro; et esso patriarca a promesso di levar ogni occasione di romper la pace, et se bene gli havea promesso di favorirli accio restassero, nondimeno per la raccomandatione di V.S.Illma mostra di esser più con noi che con essi loro. Di più habbemo detto, che favorendo detti Gesuiti, si farano inimici di V.S.Illma et di tutta la vostra Republica, essendo da quella scacciati.”

<sup>36</sup> ASVe, *Cospoli* F. 80 f. 27r/MPOIII.260. “Sono avisato dal S<sup>r</sup> Consule Illmo in Aleppo che, per quanto gli era stato detto da alcuni mercanti, quelli due Gesuiti, che come già scrissi alla Sere<sup>ta</sup> V. erano andati in quale parti, si trovavano in Tripoli per ritornarsene quì, et sperava che non potessero trovar aperta la via a suoi disegni; se bene li cognosceva per tanto ambiciosi, che si poteva creder ogni cosa, tanto più, che da due altri padri pur della

Canillac and Queyrot's final report of the voyage to Jerusalem also exposed the Franciscans' and Venetians' fears.<sup>37</sup> It also would have been one of the first documents that Vitelleschi would have read after assuming the generalship in November 1615. From the outset, Vitelleschi was acutely aware of what setting up a permanent residence in Jerusalem would entail. He knew that the Venetians and the Franciscans would always attempt to hinder the Jesuits. Likewise, he and the French knew all too well that Protestants too, namely English and Dutch merchants, would look to undermine the Jesuits' efforts, as the Jesuits' reputation in Protestant Europe was hardly forgotten just because these merchants were in the Levant.<sup>38</sup> By 1620, Vitelleschi had begun examining more thoroughly, based on the successes and failures of past ventures, how viable a residence in the Levant could be and how best to carry it forth. The Jesuits whom Vitelleschi assigned to this task wrote a formal report in 1621 to lay out a plan of action.<sup>39</sup> The very first issue that the report tackled was the Franciscans and their unwillingness to share the duties of the Holy Land with the Jesuits. Likewise, the imminent threat of the Turk would always inhibit their efforts with pilgrims from all walks of life. The Jesuits decided that the best option was to seek the protection of the French king with the Sultan's permission, as the

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med<sup>ma</sup> religione, che erano stati in Aleppo, scorrendo come si suol fare di varie cose, non hanno negato di non haver qualche pensiero di volersi introdurre alla casa del Santo Sepolcro."

<sup>37</sup> ARSI, *Gall 101*, f. 130r-133v./MPOIII254-260.

<sup>38</sup> MPOIII.269. "Alep est une grande ville habitée da Mores, de Turcs, de Juifs; et à cause de la grande quantité de marchandises qui viennent de Perse et arriveent audict Alep, il y a bon nombre de marchands François, Italiens, Anglais et Flamands, qui y resident. Quant aux Anglais et Flamands, vous savez qu'ils sont ennemis de nostre religion, et en particulier de vostre Société et Compagnie; et partant comme ils les verront arriver par delà, ils ne manqueront pas de leur dresser de embusches, et de les fair cognoistre plustost pour des espions que pour des ecclésiastiques." For more on the Jesuits and Protestantism, especially in England, see Thomas M. McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England 1541-1588: "Our Way of Proceeding?"* (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Thomas M. McCoog, "The Society of Jesus in the Three Kingdoms," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits*, edited by Thomas Worcester (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 88-103. For more on the development of Protestantism in England, cf. Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c.1400-c.1580* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992).

<sup>39</sup> It is not clear who these Jesuits were. The manuscript states simply that it was compiled by P.P. A.A.

Franco-Ottoman alliance would ensure that the Jesuits would be immune to the types of pressures others faced.<sup>40</sup> The report then listed six goals that the residence hoped to achieve:

1. Aid European pilgrims
2. Aid the Christians who live in the Holy Land, both those of the Latin and Greek Rites
3. Assist the Armenians, Maronites, and others who are on good terms with Rome and could benefit from their presence
4. Work to convert those not in communion or in concert with Rome who are in need of spiritual aid
5. Assist Patriarch Theophanes and the Greek Church in its efforts to support the Christians of Jerusalem
6. Work with the poor and destitute of the city regardless of faith<sup>41</sup>

The next step was papal approval. Vitelleschi formulated an official report to be sent to the pope under the title “Information on a Residence to be Established in Jerusalem, 1621.” Its purpose was to explain to the newly-elected pope, Gregory XV,<sup>42</sup> why the Jesuits in particular were best equipped to serve the needs of the Christian Orient. In addition to repeating the six goals listed above, this report went several steps further to demonstrate that the French king

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<sup>40</sup> ARSI, *Gall* 102 f. 42r./MPOIII.309. “A multis annis variae et plurimae venire ad Regem Christianissimum querelae quod Patres Franciscani, qui ad Sanctissimum Christi Sepulchrum resident, multa quotidie indigna patiantur a Turcis habitantibus Hierusalem, et maxime a militibus sepulchrum custodientibus; quoque Peregrini christiani, qui ex omnibus Orbis partibus eo confluunt frequentes, ita tractentur a Turcis tyrannicis, ut inde essent non modo pecuniis spoliati, sed insuper plagis et verberibus onusti, adeo ut incipiant eo venire, pertaesti malorum, quae ibidem patientur. Remedium tamen ipsi Patres Franciscani quam multi pergrini Galli inde redeuntes unicum esse dixerunt, si placeret Regi Christianissimo habere consulem Gallicum residentem, penes quem esset protectio dictorum Patrum atque omnium Christianorum ibi degentium, et maxime peregrinorum, sicut Rex habet Consules Gallos in praecipuis Orientalis Imperii Urbibus, ac simili potestate. Annuit tandem Rex, Turcarum imperatore assentiente, et consulem creavit nobilem quemdam Parisiensem, cui nomen est L’Empereur.”

<sup>41</sup> ARSI, *Gall* 102 f. 42rv./MPOIII.310. “Pro parte affirmante est ipsa quasi necessitas, quoniam Peregrini Galli, qui eo pergunt (nam Massiliam solvents eo perveniunt viginti dierum spatio, pro victu et naulo solutis tantum aureis decem) affirmant nullum Peregrinis esse auxilium spirituale, nullam consolationem nisi ab ipsis locis sanctis, a bonis autem illis Patribus nullam, propter varias causas offerunt. 2° Christiani qui ibi habitant, tam ritus latini quam Graeci, incredibili laborant ignorantia, neque ullum ostendunt pietatis sensum, quia a quo accipiant, non habent. 3° Multi ibi habitant Armeni, Maronitae et alii, qui bene sunt cum Ecclesia Romana, et juvari possunt, nunc autem nullum habent cum Patribus Franciscanis commercium, tantum abest ut ab iis auxilium accipiant. 4° Ex toto Oriente eo confluunt schismatici et haeretici, qui et nostrorum opera poterint multum proficere, et iis forsan cum Spe adjuvantibus, poterint mitti et excurrere aliqui nostris ad illorum regiones. 5° Patriarcha Hierosolymitanus id summopere optat, et alias obtulit nostris ecclesiam et habitationem intra ipsam Urbem, modo aliunde sibi de sustentatione provideant, quam negabat se posse pro inopia subministrare. 6° Erit solatio nostris, qui Constantinopolim degunt, ut non semper uno in loco resideant ibi fere consolatione destituti, nisi inquam a Deo habent; sed modo in una residential erint ad aliquot annos, modo in alia.”

<sup>42</sup> Paul V had died that January.

would protect the Jesuits, and that the Greek patriarch had promised to support and favor the Jesuits by providing them with a church and residence. The request also made it clear that the Jesuits had no intention of replacing the Franciscans at the Holy Sepulchre; rather they sought only to augment the Catholic Church's presence in the city.<sup>43</sup> Shortly thereafter, official word came from the French ambassador, Louis Deshayes, that the French consuls explicitly requested Jesuits to serve their own spiritual needs, they were to be under the protection of the king, and emir Fahr-eddin had already granted the Jesuits permission to stay in the city of Nazareth.<sup>44</sup> Likewise, Jean Lempereur, the newly-appointed French consul to Jerusalem, wrote to Rome from Paris that he was set to depart for Jerusalem, and embraced the opportunity to serve the needs of the Jesuits in their efforts. While he recognized that prudence and discretion were necessary due to the leery Franciscans, he was confident that he and the Jesuits sent to the city could successfully open a Jesuit college.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 273rv./MPOIII.312. "Cum ab ano et altero anno, agente Christianissimo Rege, Consul gallus stabilitum fuerit Hierosolymis, qui esset Protector eorum qui ibi sunt Christianorum, ut in aliis locis fieri solet, ubi sunt Consules Galli, et potest dictus Consul ut ibi sit Residentia Patrum Societatis Iesu, non videtur aequum ut ista consolatione privetur. Patriarca Hierosolymitanus id summopere potat, et offert Societati ecclesiam et habitationem intra ipsam Urbem, modo aliunde sibi de sustentatione provideant, quam negat se prae inopia posse sumministrare. Patribus Franciscanis non potest praeiudicare Residentia Societatis in illa Urbe, quasi vereri debeant Sanctum Sepulcrum ipsis adimatur et Societati tradatur. Nam ipsa Sti Sepulchri custodia est omnino aliena a ministeriis Societatis, quae illam solitariam et velut eremiticam vitam non profitetur, neque chorum aut cantum habet, quo career Sti Sepulchri custodia non potest. Et vero id ipsis Summus Potifex potest confirmare, cum prohibitione ne Patres Societatis id unquam possint suscipere, et ipse Generalis Societatis idipsum ipsis Perpetua securitate contestabitur."

<sup>44</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 269r./MPOIII.313-314. "Li consoli che sono In Levante per la Nazione francesca, essendo privati d'ogni consolatione spirituale della quale non sapevano donde provedersi, gli ho avisati di pregar humilmente Il Re di volerli mandar de i padri di Vostra Compagnia, la qual cosa hanno desiderato che in nome loro io facessi intender a Sua Maestà... Sapendo quanto importa alla fede catholica che Vostra Compagnia havesse una Residenza in Terra Santa, ho ottenuto dal Emiro Facardin, principe de la Phenicia e de la Galilea, che non ha altro di mahometano chel nome, che li Reverenze vestre potessero aver una Residenza nel santissimo luogo di Nazareth, dove luy metterà tal ordine che vi potranno restare con la sicurtà che vivono in Christiania."

<sup>45</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 96 II, f. 267r./MPOIII.318. "Cette charge est de très grande consequence pour ce qui regarde l'interest particulier des dicts frères et pelerins; mais elle est encore de plus grande importance ecore parce que par le moyen d'un consul l'on pourra avec le temps establir un college d'hommes doctes pour reduire et restablir en sa pristine splendeur tous les christiens schismatiques entierement desvoyés du bon chemin."

The Venetians, however, were vexed about the possibilities of a Franco-Jesuit alliance that could displace them and the Franciscans in the Holy Land. While the letters between the Jesuits, the French, and the papacy made it clear that this was not the case, the Venetians nevertheless feared that the Jesuits sought to infest Jerusalem with Franco-papal perfidy. By spring 1622, the Venetian bailo in Constantinople, Zorzi Giustiniani, was troubled enough that he wrote to the Senate and Doge Antonio Priuli, explaining how the Jesuits seemed on the verge of establishing residences throughout the Christian Orient, particularly in Jerusalem, Aleppo, and Cairo. To make matters worse, he stated that this was a personal goal of Jean Lempereur, as he was seeking to displace the Franciscans in the Holy Land in favor of French Jesuits, who were nothing more than his agents.<sup>46</sup> If this were to take place, as it appeared it was about to, the Jesuits would overrun the friars and establish themselves as the premier Catholic order of the Christian Orient, much to the chagrin of the Venetians and Franciscans and much to the benefit of the French.

But this never happened. It appears that Vitelleschi, Lempereur, and the rest of the Franco-Jesuit camp overlooked two important factors concerning the viability of a Jesuit residence in Jerusalem: the Christian communities themselves and the Venetians' relationship with these communities. While the Jesuits had the support of the Greek patriarch, the report made little mention of whether or not the other groups they wanted to serve desired their help.

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<sup>46</sup> ASVe, *Cospoli*, F. 93 f. 161r./MPOIII.323-324. "Capito qui, li giorni passati con una saltia, un Mons<sup>r</sup> Lampedor, spedito dal Re Christianissimo a persuasione di questo S<sup>re</sup> Ambasciador et Gesuiti, per resieder Console in Gerasalem, con fine d'introdur poi col suo mezzo essi Gesuiti in quei Santi Luoghi, quali tentano anco col mezzo del medesimo Amb<sup>r</sup>, che li favorisse sopra modo d'introdursi in Aleppo, et Cairo, sotto titolo d Capellani dei Consuli francesi, che ivi resiedono, per poter poi con tale introduzione fondar a poco a poco in quella Città lor Collegio, come sono soliti: cose, che venendo da chi conosce i fini, e andamenti loro, stimate molto contrarie al servitio delle Religione, et di quei Santi Luoghi, et agl'interessi di stato della Serenissima Republica con questo Imperio, et al negotio a quelle scale della nostra Nazione... Io però ho fatto ad istanza dei predetti Padri rinovar in più efficace forma li commandamenti ancora ottenuti, perché non siano in questi Santi Luoghi introdotti altri Religiosi, che loro, che ho conegnati al padre procuratore, che sta di ritorno."

And this again is where the Venetians came in and where Giustiniani, better connected and seemingly more aware of the nature of the Christian Orient than Lempereur appeared to be, could report by mid-1624 that no Jesuit residence would be established any time soon. In an April 1624 letter back to Venice, Giustiniani reported that deputies from the Latin, Greek, and Armenian churches of Jerusalem all came forward explaining that, while they were not against a French presence *per se*, they would be displeased if the Venetians, who understood their plight best, were excluded. Furthermore, the contingent of deputies was opposed to a Jesuit residence due to the possible effects it would have on the Franciscans, whom they trusted deeply.<sup>47</sup> And just ten days later, Giustiniani wrote to Venice to share news resulting from his audience with the grand mufti, Ezaad Efendi,<sup>48</sup> to discuss the prospects of the Jesuits establishing their presence in Jerusalem. After explaining to him the sentiments of the Latins, Greeks, and Armenians, as well as a letter of condemnation from Cherkes Mehmet Pasha, Giustiniani succeeded in convincing the grand mufti that the Jesuits were nothing more than Spanish spies using French diplomats in order to install themselves in the city of Jerusalem. While there does not seem to be any concrete evidence to support this claim, the fear of Hapsburg spies was strong enough that the mufti believed it, and saw to it that no Jesuit residence was realized in Jerusalem.<sup>49</sup>

Despite the failures with setting up a residence in Jerusalem, Vitelleschi did not give up the pursuit of establishing a permanent Jesuit presence in the Levant. The city Vitelleschi chose for an eventual residence, and in many ways the better place, was Aleppo. As the most important commercial, cultural, and economic hub of the Levant, and one of the three main centers of economic and cultural activity in the empire alongside Constantinople and Alexandria, Aleppo

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<sup>47</sup> ASVe, *Cospoli*, F. 97 f. 183r-186v./MPOIII.335-337.

<sup>48</sup> The Grand Mufti is the highest ranking religious official in a given Muslim territory.

<sup>49</sup> ASVe, *Cospoli*, F. 97 f. 239r-240v./MPOIII.338-339. Cf. Emilio Barcena, "La Spagna in Terra Santa," in *La custodia di Terra Santa e l'Europa*, 95-116.



was the perfect crossroads for the Jesuits to intermingle with the various groups that came to the city. Situated on the Syrian plain, Aleppo was centrally located to be the Ottoman entrepôt between Europe and the Far East. Connected via old Roman, Byzantine, and later routes to the Mediterranean and the Euphrates River, Aleppo was just days' journey from the Ottoman port city of Alexandretta (Iskenderun) and a few days' journey down river to Baghdad and eventually the Persian Gulf and other points east. Aleppo was a mishmash of peoples, and, especially after the Ottomans conquered it from the Mamluks in 1517, a vibrant urban center that projected Ottoman authority and its role in stabilizing and facilitating commercial exchange.<sup>50</sup> Because of its urban dynamism and cosmopolitan character, Aleppo was a much more logical choice for establishing a residence than Jerusalem, which, despite its religious importance, was not a major hub of commercial activity.<sup>51</sup>

Before setting up a permanent residence, Vitelleschi decided to test the waters and send two missionaries to the city in 1625. The mission was supposed to work with the Christians of the city and see how amenable they were to the Jesuits' efforts. In their report of their brief scouting mission, Gaspar Maniglier and Giovanni Stella explained that they were welcomed and aided by the French residents of the city, who proved to be useful allies during their efforts. Likewise, they were firm in their belief that the protection of the French king would be the best means to ensure their safety and longevity in the city. However, safety was never a given. While they did achieve some work with many in the city, and heard numerous confessions from Latin, Eastern, and Oriental Christians alike, they were nonetheless forced to leave the city under

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<sup>50</sup> Watenpaugh, *The Image of an Ottoman City*, 1-59.

<sup>51</sup> Dror Zeevi, *An Ottoman Century: The District of Jerusalem in the 1600s* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996); Oded Peri, *Christianity Under Islam in Jerusalem*.

pressure from the Ottomans, who were less than trustful of the usually-aggressive Jesuits.<sup>52</sup> The French ambassador, Philippe de Harlay, Comte de Césy, wrote to Vitelleschi with regret that the Jesuits were forced to leave abruptly, explaining that the Jesuits were at the mercy of the Turks and relied on their good graces.<sup>53</sup> The Jesuits had been imprisoned unjustly and were under constant pressure from their mounting enemies, the Venetians, English, and Flemings, among others.<sup>54</sup> Unfortunately, papal bulls granting the Jesuits the ability to give plenary indulgences and to grant absolution to heretics and schismatics would only go so far;<sup>55</sup> it appeared that the Jesuits would have to rely overwhelmingly on the French (perhaps more than they had wished) and their alliance with the Ottomans if an Aleppo residence was to succeed.

By late 1626, Césy was able to secure the necessary Ottoman permission for the Jesuits to establish their residence in Aleppo. The prefect of the newly-formed Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, Cardinal Ludovico Ludovisi, wrote to Césy in December 1626 to express his excitement for the coming residence. Likewise, he prayed that the French would serve the Jesuits as their protectors and help them in their goal of opening many schools in the city and potentially beyond Aleppo. Ludovisi was confident that the great diversity of peoples and nations within Aleppo made it the perfect place for the Jesuits to have a definitive impact on the various sects of the Ottoman Empire. But Ludovisi also warned that the French and the Jesuits should be cautious, as their enemies were mounting and tensions with Venice and Protestant powers that remained high within Europe could find their way to the Levant.<sup>56</sup> And while the Ottomans allowed the Jesuits to stay in the city as long as they remained under the

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<sup>52</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 III, f. 315r-327v.

<sup>53</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 328rv.

<sup>54</sup> Antoine Rabbath, ed., *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire du christianisme en Orient (XVI – XIX siècle)*, vol I (Paris: AMS Press, 1905), 361-363.

<sup>55</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 276rv, 331rv; *Gall.* 95 II, f. 337rv.

<sup>56</sup> Rabbath, *Documents inédits I*, 363-364.

protection of the French, not all were welcoming to their new neighbors. One person in particular who was not so keen on the Jesuits' presence in Aleppo was Cyril, Greek Patriarch of Alexandria. Cyril was more than just a driving force of Greek religious and cultural identity with a significant amount of sway among the Greeks of Aleppo; he desired to reform the Greek Church along Calvinist lines, and had gone so far as to collaborate with the English and Dutch to carry this forth. He was known to dine with the Dutch and English ambassadors, and had purportedly given Greek typefaces to be sent to England in order to have reformed texts translated and printed in Greek.<sup>57</sup>

But the French believed they had found an ally against their Veneto-Protestant enemies in the grand vizier, Damat Halil Pasha. Distrustful of the Venetians and well aware that they sought to undermine the Jesuits for their own strategic purposes, the grand vizier was not taking the Venetians' claims about Jesuits undermining Ottoman authority seriously. He knew all too well that they were pushing to persecute the Jesuits in their own territories; thus, the Venetians' problems with the Jesuits were their own, not his.<sup>58</sup> It was also well known that the Venetians, Greeks, English, and Dutch were actively undermining the Jesuits' efforts elsewhere within the Empire. By 1628, they had succeeded in getting the Jesuits expelled from Constantinople and were working on seizing their properties within the city, namely the Church of Saint Benoit.<sup>59</sup>

The Grand Vizier, while he had not stopped the Jesuits' enemies in Constantinople or Jerusalem, was able to secure stability in Aleppo for the Jesuits and their French patrons, despite Venetian protests. While the threats from Cyril and his Venetian and Protestant allies never fully died down, by the summer of 1629, Jérôme Queyrot, who had pioneered the mission, was in

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 353. For more on Cyril and his theological reforms, cf. George P. Michaelides, "The Greek Orthodox Position on the Confession of Cyril Lucaris," *Church History* 12, no. 2 (June 1, 1943): 118–129.

<sup>58</sup> Rabbath, *Documents inédits I*, 365–367.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 354–355.

Aleppo, happy to report that he was receiving great cooperation from many in the city. Included in that number was a Greek metropolitan who was not so keen on the types of Calvinist reforms that Cyril was promoting. In fact, he opened his doors to Queyrot and allowed him to run a school from his home. With nearly thirty pupils being instructed in Arabic, Greek, and Italian, the school was a burgeoning success; and Queyrot hoped that in time the school would outgrow its modest accommodation and they could establish their own college.<sup>60</sup> But two years later, while there had been some growth, Queyrot was experiencing numerous problems. First, while he founded the school for Greeks, the number of Greek pupils had diminished and he was teaching overwhelmingly in Italian, as his students were either Europeans or spoke Arabic, a language he never mastered. He also was competing with the Franciscans, much like they had in Jerusalem and Constantinople. As they were preferred by the Venetians, who had Franciscans as their private chaplains, and by most Greeks, the Franciscans frustrated the Jesuits' efforts. Queyrot lamented how he felt cornered; it seemed to be only the French and a few other Catholics together, opposed by "Turks, Moors, Jews, English or Flemish heretics, and schismatics whether Greeks or Armenians" who refused to work with the Jesuits, putting them at loggerheads with their religio-political enemies.<sup>61</sup>

And these enemies also went after the Jesuits' French patrons. In 1631, the new French consul Pierre d'Olivier was accused of nonfeasance concerning the death of a French merchant named Pretet. When Pretet was killed, d'Olivier had allegedly done little to protect the rights of

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 380. "Cette école va croissant, de jour en jour, si bien que l'on y compte maintenant jusques à trente enfants Grecs, qui apprenne en grec, en arabe, et en italien. Nous espérons qu'avec le temps ceux des autres nations se serviront de nous, comme les Grecs, en l'instruction de leurs enfants, si Notre-Seigneur nous fait la grâce d'avoir ici quelque maison, comme il est du tout nécessaire."

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 382. "Il faut accorder qu'on travaille plus en chrétienté dans un mois, que non pas par deçà en deux ans. Car nous ne traitons qu'avec les Français et quelques Grecs catholiques. Quant aux Turcs, Mores, Juifs, hérétiques Anglais ou Flamands, et schismatiques Grecs ou Arméniens, il ne faut penser à traiter avec eux. Les autres religieux ont un avantage sur nous, parce que les marchands Vénitiens se servent d'eux et non de nous."

the deceased and made no effort to pursue the culprits. Instead, many, including the Venetians, began saying that he had turned Turk and had allied himself with janissaries rather than perform his duties to protect Europeans. Moreover, the Venetians among others began clamoring that his negligence facilitated the persecutions that many, the Jesuits and Franciscans included, had faced at the hands of the Ottomans.<sup>62</sup> When Queyrot received word of these accusations, he immediately leapt to d'Olivier's defense, exclaiming that it had been d'Olivier who had secured the liberation of the Jesuits who had been imprisoned on Cyprus, and without his help the school in Aleppo would have been a failure. Queyrot was convinced that the mission's success depended on d'Olivier, and that the French consul was far more responsible for its successes than its failures.<sup>63</sup> However, these accusations continually undermined the Jesuits' position in the city.

By September 1631, the residence was barely hanging on. Gaspar Maniglier wrote to Vitelleschi on 5 September to explain that, while the mission was progressing and the school continued mostly interrupted, the main issue was financing the residence. He explained to Vitelleschi that, unless they received great financial assistance, the school would fail. Jesuits in Lyon had helped some, but Maniglier and Queyrot knew that only Vitelleschi could find enough capital to see the mission succeed.<sup>64</sup>

Vitelleschi agreed and had the missionaries borrow the money from French merchants. One man who immediately came to their aid was Robert Contour. A merchant and dragoman

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 375-378.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 379. "Je, soussigné, religieux de la Compagnie de Jésus, atteste à tous ceux à qui il appartiendra, qu'en tout le temps que j'ai demeuré un cette ville d'Alep, Monsieur d'Olivier, Ecuyer, ci-devant consul, n'a rendu aucune action en défaveur de notre Compagnie; ains au contraire nous reconnaissons de lui avoir de l'obligation pour nous avoir assisté de son autorité et faveur, en diverses occasions, et particulièrement pour avoir impétré un commandement du Grand Vizir pour la délivrance de deux de nos Pères qui avaient été faits prisonniers en Chypre; et pour s'être employé pour nous, avec beaucoup d'affection, lorsqu'il s'est traité d'encommencer une école pour l'instruction des Grecs de ce pays, dans la logis de leur Metropolitane. En foi de quoi, j'ai donné la présente, soussignée de mon seign, et scellée du sceau de notre Mission."

<sup>64</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 376r.

with vast connections in Aleppo, Contour provided both financial and institutional assistance for the Jesuits as they attempted to integrate themselves into the city over course of the 1630s.<sup>65</sup> Contour was supplying large sums of money to the Jesuits by 1634. They needed the positive reinforcement, as the discontent of the Franciscans, and now the Carmelites, was quite pronounced. Maniglier explained to Vitelleschi that their fellow Catholic priests were none too happy with the Jesuits' presence and that their dissatisfaction was in part hindering the Jesuits' efforts to eradicate the ignorance of the local priests, as their enemies whispered to these priests that the Jesuits would eventually seek to steal their followers from them. Likewise, Ottoman officials either put too much pressure on *dhimmi* communities or did very little to protect them, as the main thrust of their rule over the city centered on making it a center of imperial and commercial power, which resulted in more taxes and greater emphasis on an specifically Ottoman brand of Islam. But Contour's help greatly pleased Queyrot and Maniglier, and whatever hope they had lost was now returning, albeit slowly. However, there was a problem with this arrangement: borrowing all that money from the French, while helpful, meant they had accrued quite a debt; and eventually their creditors, even the generous Contour, would call in that debt and would not be too pleased if the Jesuits defaulted.<sup>66</sup>

Over the course of the next two years, money problems persisted, as Maniglier and Queyrot continually wrote to Vitelleschi about their mounting debts and need for more money.<sup>67</sup> By September 1634, the pair seemed downtrodden and frustrated. They struggled with how to pay off current debts while still having enough funds to keep the school afloat. While there were

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<sup>65</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 380rv. For more on Contour, cf. Bernard Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la réforme catholique: Syrie, Liban, Palestine, XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles* (Rome: Ecole française de Rome, 1994), 277.

<sup>66</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II, f. 387r-388v.

<sup>67</sup> In May 1634, Maniglier was under enough pressure to ask Vitelleschi for 300 ducats that should go directly to the French provincial in order to pay debts owed to him. Cf. ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 393rv.

always French merchants ready to loan them money, this did little to pay off old debts; they preferred to receive money from Vitelleschi, the Jesuit provincial in France, or other French superiors in Marseilles, Lyon, and Paris rather than borrow from merchants.<sup>68</sup> But while Jesuits in France had promised to fund the mission, Queyrot and Maniglier kept borrowing money from Contour and others, as the funds allocated in Europe had yet to arrive.<sup>69</sup> By mid-1635, the letters grew increasingly repetitive: they needed more money, the school was not growing as quickly as they liked, and their debts to Contour and others were mounting higher and higher.<sup>70</sup> They also continued to recount their troubles with the Venetians and Franciscans as well as how Aleppo remained a problematic city due to the pressures of the Turks.<sup>71</sup>

When a full report of the mission thus far arrived in Rome in 1636 to recount all that had occurred over the previous five years, a clearer picture of the residence emerged. First, the report exposed just how much Queyrot and Maniglier depended on the French in order to establish themselves in the city. When their rivals attempted to prevent them from saying Mass and teaching, it was the French who repeatedly came to their aid.<sup>72</sup> Queyrot relayed how, when they first arrived, they were staying in an apartment in the European fondaco, but they constantly feared that they would be kicked out if a merchant required the space. Queyrot explained that they were deeply worried that a Venetian merchant would request it out of spite, just to have them removed. The other problem was that the fondaco owner had Turkish creditors who continually threatened to seize it; Queyrot feared either higher rents or eviction should this ever

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<sup>68</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 398r-399v.

<sup>69</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 401rv.

<sup>70</sup> Three reports, dated 30 January, 14 February, and 26 April, all reiterate the problems with the school and the issues with growing debts. There is little content concerning the daily operations of the school beyond brief descriptions of the number of students, and it would not be until 1636 that there was an increase in pupils. The emphasis is mainly on funding and debts. Cf. ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 404r-405v, 406rv, 408rv.

<sup>71</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 402rv.

<sup>72</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 411rv.

occur. For this reason, in 12 February 1633, they bought a house owned by a French merchant, borrowing heavily to afford it.<sup>73</sup> But the pressures did not stop there. Shortly after building a chapel in their home, a band of Turks raided it, stealing many of the vessels and other valuables that the Jesuits owned, and they had to borrow money again to replace them.<sup>74</sup> Then, after a few months of quiet, they were arrested for attempting to say unapproved Masses on 14 August 1633. It was only after the French petitioned the Turkish officials and paid for their freedom that they were released; they would have to pay back that money, too. After that, they were continually under French protection and the remaining year and a half passed without persecution.<sup>75</sup> They were able to turn to teaching various languages as well as Catholic theology to local Christian youths. However, they still struggled with paying for books and supporting a Maronite priest who was hired to teach Syriac, in addition to trying to keep up with their mounting debts.<sup>76</sup>

Eventually, things settled down and the residence became a permanent fixture in Aleppo throughout the rest of Vitelleschi's generalate. And it continued well into the reign of King Louis XIV. In the ten years from the 1635 report to Vitelleschi's death in 1645, the residence and school thrived. By 1640 they could boast that the school had successfully found a permanent teacher of Syriac, and they had established a sodality for Christian youths of the city.<sup>77</sup> Also, many of the Greeks had been swayed and had begun sending their youths to the Jesuits rather than the Franciscans. By 1650, five years after Vitelleschi's death, the residence in Aleppo had expanded, and they had even succeeded in opening residences in Damascus and Sidon. The Damascus school, under Queyrot, had seventy students who were capable of writing and reading Greek, Latin, French, and Italian; and a few others were progressing well with Syriac. This was a

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<sup>73</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 411v.

<sup>74</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 413rv-414r.

<sup>75</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 414v-416v.

<sup>76</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 II f. 417rv.

<sup>77</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 495rv.



far cry from the small handful of Greeks he had first instructed in 1637.<sup>78</sup> But money always remained an issue; in nearly every letter dispatched to Rome, Vitelleschi was continually reminded of the poverty of the residences and the need for books, supplies, teachers, and money for rent and sustenance. This meant a greater and greater dependence on the French. By 1643, Vitelleschi had the residences permanently placed under the jurisdiction of the French province, which would provide them with a regular annual income to help alleviate the debts owed to French merchants and would perhaps sway the French to be a bit more lenient with debts and aid in the city.<sup>79</sup>

By Vitelleschi's death in 1645, the Aleppo residence and the satellite schools in Damascus and Sidon were run by French Jesuits, funded by French merchants, and protected by French diplomats. While Queyrot, Maniglier, and a third Jesuit named Jean Amieu strove to bolster them, and the level of correspondence with Vitelleschi shows that they were dedicated to the spiritual mission of the Society, their reliance upon French diplomatic networks as well as French money meant that they became entirely dependent upon France's position as the Ottomans' main European ally. If this alliance ended, the residences would be in danger. Vitelleschi was well aware of this tenuous situation. But he also knew, and strove to keep them afloat as a result, that the French gave the residences their best chance for success given the status of the French in Aleppo. While Venice and the Franciscans might have been disgruntled with the Jesuits' presence, there was little they could do if the Jesuits were under French patronage and subsequently Ottoman protection. Unlike in Jerusalem, where they held more sway due to the city's religious importance, the Franciscans were powerless to defend

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<sup>78</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 619rv. "Le Père Hiérôme Queyrot, là seul avec un frère, est assez occupé à enseigner d'ordinaire plus de 70 écoliers, la plupart du rite Grec, auxquels il enseigne, les samedis, la doctrine chrétienne, à notre ordinaire."

<sup>79</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 529rv, 530rv, 531rv, 534rv.

themselves against the Jesuits' advances. And the Venetians were no longer the preferred trading partner of the Ottomans that they had been one-hundred years prior. The English and Dutch, as newcomers, were equally at a disadvantage. While the English did see their trade liberties in the Levant increase after 1638 and again after 1641, they never achieved the diplomatic status that the French obtained.<sup>80</sup> After failing to establish a residence in Jerusalem, Vitelleschi recognized that reliance on the French needed to occur where the French held most sway, and this was Aleppo. For this reason, Vitelleschi wedded himself to the French to achieve his goals. While surely the French increasingly had more and more of a say in how the Jesuits engaged with Syrian society, having a second residence fail due to the unholy alliance of Venice, the Franciscans, and the Protestants was unthinkable.

### **The problems of the martyr-missionary narrative**

Alongside the external problems with the Maronite College and establishing residences in the Levant, Vitelleschi also faced tensions from within the Society. While Jesuit missionaries were navigating the various competing rivalries in Ottoman Palestine and Syria, Jesuit novices were beginning to embrace their studies as the means by which they too could one day save souls in the various Jesuit missionary theatres. Vitelleschi, while pleased to have such eager seminarians ready to evangelize of the world, was nevertheless aware of the reality that missions did not succeed solely because of eagerness to carry them out. And when it came to the Christian Orient, the decades preceding his generalate had taught him that sending Jesuits to Egypt or to the Levant depended on a unique set of circumstances that all had to fall into place at the right

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<sup>80</sup> Queyrot explained that the English received liberties in 1638, but Edward Van Dyck said that this did not occur until 1641 under Charles II. It appears that both dates are accurate. Cf. ARSI, *Gall.* 95 I, f. 472v; Edward Van Dyck, *Capitulations of the Ottoman Empire Since the Year 1150* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1881), 12.

moment. As a result, Vitelleschi, on one hand, had to explain to novices that the moment was not right; on the other hand, he had to be supportive of them and not discourage those who wanted to go on mission. Vitelleschi had to balance their eagerness against the true nature of missionary activity, which often ran contrary to the ways in which Jesuits trained their missionaries. Vitelleschi was thus forced to support a martyr-missionary narrative while simultaneously tempering it in order to make future missions as successful as possible.

The problem was never finding missionaries. On the contrary, Vitelleschi found that he often had to turn them away. It was a good problem to have, but nevertheless could cause tensions between Vitelleschi and the Society's youngest members. The roots the Jesuit martyr-missionary narrative can be found in the educational foundations of missionaries-in-training, as novices were taught from the beginnings of their education to embrace the call to save souls. As we saw in the previous chapter with Jerome Nadal's *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia*, devotional images were an integral part of the Jesuit educational experience.<sup>81</sup> For decades, narratives of early-church martyrdoms had proliferated in the seminaries of the Society. Print series such as Giovanni Battista Cavallieri's *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1583) circulated widely and promoted the aims of the post-Tridentine Church and how early Christians conformed to those ideals. Combined with lectures on personal piety and dedication to the faith, these narratives offered an archetype against which novices could compare themselves. The result was an educational program that turned novices into proto-missionaries who saw themselves in the same light as the early martyrs. By reinforcing connections between images of martyrs and the practice of the true faith, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* pushed students to see themselves as the potential martyr-missionary in the same vein as the early Christian martyrs

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<sup>81</sup> For more on the instructive nature of imagery in Jesuit schools, cf. Thomas Buser, "Jerome Nadal and Early Jesuit Art in Rome," *The Art Bulletin* 58, no. 3 (September 1, 1976): 424–433.

who died while spreading the Word.<sup>82</sup> In her work on Jesuits in the Kingdom of Naples, Jennifer Selwyn elucidates how Jesuit schools crafted a martyr-missionary narrative that triumphalized and romanticized the heroic overseas Jesuit missionary. Selwyn explains that the majority of students desired to be sent overseas in order to emulate not just late-antique martyrs, but also Jesuits such as Francis Xavier; and these novices wrote countless letters to Rome asking to be assigned to one of these highly coveted overseas missions.<sup>83</sup>

By 1620, these narratives had become well entrenched in the rhetoric of Jesuit education. And the Christian Orient likewise became one of these theatres to which young Jesuits wished to be sent. One such novice who incessantly wrote to Vitelleschi was Giuseppe Pomo. Born in 1601 in Palermo, he entered the Jesuit college in his hometown at age fourteen. He studied philosophy and theology, and became an ordained priest in 1627.<sup>84</sup> Pomo's eagerness to go on mission manifested itself as early as 1621. While enthusiastic, and from all accounts an excellent student, Pomo was headstrong and went directly to the source rather than go through his provincial, Girolamo Tagliavia, to discuss his future. He wrote to Vitelleschi on numerous occasions, beginning on 21 September 1621. Pomo explained to the father general that he strove to be sent on mission, as he had dedicated so much of his life to God and wished to find the lost sheep who needed to be shepherded back to God. He told Vitelleschi how he felt that saving souls in foreign lands would be pleasing to God, and that although Vitelleschi believed he was too young, his

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<sup>82</sup> Kirstin Noreen, "Ecclesiae Militantis Triumph: Jesuit Iconography and the Counter-Reformation," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 29, no. 3 (October 1, 1998): 689–715.

<sup>83</sup> Jennifer D. Selwyn, *A Paradise Inhabited by Devils*. For more on Jesuit education in the Mezzogiorno, cf. Mark Andrew Lewis, "Preachers of Sound Doctrine, Followers of the True Religion, and Learned: The Social Impact of the Jesuit College of Naples, 1552-1600," Ph.D. Dissertation (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto, 1995).

<sup>84</sup> MPOV.569.

youth, dedication, and desire would compensate for any potential skills or savvy he lacked due to his inexperience.<sup>85</sup>

Vitelleschi was torn. While he greatly appreciated Pomo's desire to be sent overseas, Vitelleschi was not convinced Pomo was ready. On 4 November, he wrote to Tagliavia, explaining that he felt "much consolation and edification" in hearing of Pomo's desires; but as there was no mission at that moment, he asked Tagliavia to send blessings to Pomo in his name and bid him to focus on his studies.<sup>86</sup> Two weeks later, Vitelleschi, in response to another of Pomo's letters, explained to Tagliavia that, not only was there no mission, but also that Pomo should focus on his vocation and studies rather than future missions of which he might be a part. While Vitelleschi surely promised to keep him in mind, the moment was not right.<sup>87</sup> In addition to there not being a mission, which was overwhelmingly the deciding factor, at this point Pomo was very young and still at the beginning of his studies. While Pomo was eager to serve God, Vitelleschi and Tagliavia were not prepared to let him go, as he was not ready.

But Pomo was relentless. By 1624, convinced that Tagliavia had failed to temper Pomo's eagerness, Vitelleschi wrote directly to Pomo, hoping to convince him to quiet his desires and focus on his studies. He explained to Pomo that, as of yet, there was no mission to the Indies in the works, and that, while he supported his eagerness, his time had not yet arrived. Vitelleschi

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<sup>85</sup> ARSI, *Fondo Gesuitico 735/5* n° 287/MPOV.25-27. "Molt'anni sono che io sfacciatamente m'ho fatto del sordo alla voce di Dio S<sup>re</sup> Nostro il q<sup>le</sup> m'ha chiamato a patir per lui in paesi stranieri, e per amor suo andar cercando la pecorella smarrita del peccatore et infedele in parti lontane, nelle q<sup>li</sup> mi dice continuamente che vi è gran carestia d'huomini che la cerchino... Il fine che mi muove d'andar in paesi lontani ad aggiutar l'anime dell'infedeli e peccatori non è altro se non perché in q<sup>o</sup> credo di certo dar gusto e far cosa grata al nostro Dio, al q<sup>le</sup> mi sento obligato di farci col offerta di me stesso per molto raggioni e titoli..."

<sup>86</sup> ARSI, *Sic. 8 I*, f. 222v/MPOV.27. "Il f Giuseppe Pomo mi dimanda con grand'istantia d'andar' all'Indie. Ne Sento molta consolazione et edificatione e ne fo bene memoria nel solito catalogo. V.R. glielo faccia sapere in risposta, salutandolo caramente in mio nome."

<sup>87</sup> ARSI, *Sic. 8 I*, f. 225r./MPOV.28. "Li fratelli Giulio Massa e Giuseppe Pomo replicano il desiderio d'andar all'Indie. V.R. li saluti caramente in mio nome, dicendo loro in risposta, che stanno nel catalogo di quei che hanno tal vocatione, e me ne ricorderò."

told Pomo he was not certain when a mission would happen, but “when it comes to sending people to the Indies, which will be shortly, in divine favor, I will remember you. In time.”<sup>88</sup>

Pomo kept writing. By May 1624, recognizing that Pomo would not yield, Vitelleschi sent him a more thorough reply. He began this response by explaining how pleased he was that Pomo continued to be so eager, and that he was now inclined to take Pomo’s requests more seriously. Rather than dismiss Pomo’s requests, he explained to him, quite pointedly, what being a missionary entailed. He made it clear that it was not like transferring to another province, but was much more akin to being cast into another world. He implored Pomo to “think very hard [about the matter] because those who are sent to the Indies must have it at heart to sacrifice themselves completely to God, even in their own blood when that occasion may come, and to not think of a return here. Ready yourself to this and do not forget about me in your prayers.”<sup>89</sup>

By January 1625, however, impressed with Pomo’s intellectual growth and maturity, Vitelleschi embraced the idea of Pomo going on mission. He was encouraged with his progress and the tone of his letters, and he thought that Pomo was close to ready. But he again implored him to question his desires and to continue to work toward understanding his vocation. And, as there was no mission yet, there was plenty of time left for this.<sup>90</sup> By summer 1626, Pomo had

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<sup>88</sup> ARSI, *Sic. 8 II*, f. 493v./MPOV.30-31. “Havete fatto bene a ricordami con la vostra delli 18 di Marzo il vostro desiderio delle Indie e molto mi consolo di veder in voi si vivo tal fervore. Seguitate a raccomandarlo de Signore acciò si degni farvi gratia della executione alla quale io mi veggo inclinato, ma per hora non vi dico cosa certa. Quando si tratterà di mandar gente all’Indie che sera in breve al favor divino, mi ricorderò di voi. In tanto.”

<sup>89</sup> ARSI, *Sic. 8 II*, f. 497v./MPOV.31. “La vostra del p° di Aprile ha accresciuto la mia inclinazione di mandarvi all’Indie, e forse seguirà con l’occasione da voi accennata. La risoluzione e grave, per che non si tratta dalla mutatione di una provincia all’altre, ma di andare ad un altro mondo per dir così. Et però prima di prenderla è necessario che ci raccomandiamo al Signore, e che voi pensiate molto bene perche quelli che si mandando all’Indie, devono haver animo di sacrificarsi in tutto a Dio benedetto, et nel proprio sangue quando venisse l’occasione, e di non pensare al ritorno in queste parti. Preparatevi a questo et non vi scordate di me nelle orationi vestre.”

<sup>90</sup> ARSI, *Sic. 9 I*, f. 2rv./MPOV.33. “L’ultima vostra lettera delli 2 Xbre mi ha pedificato più delle’altre, per che veggo che S. Franc. Xav. vi communia lo spirito che gli haveva per convertir gli infedeli. Io ho molto [...] a complarvi; che però nel libro [...] scritto. Ho fatto un segno particolare, per ricordarmi nell’occasione, sic he non accade che vi prendete nuovo fastidio in ricordarmi il vostro desiderio, e basterà che lo trattiate con Dio solamente

written nineteen letters to Vitelleschi, and this was enough to convince the father general that Pomo was ready to be sent on mission. He explained to Pomo that the young novice's latest in a string of letters had "brightened and edified me greatly in the fervency of your vocation to the Indies," and that Pomo should prepare himself for an upcoming mission; Pomo would soon find out that he was heading to Ethiopia.<sup>91</sup>

Pomo's eventual companions on his mission to Ethiopia had also been petitioning Vitelleschi for several years about their chances of being selected to go on mission. Aymar Guérin, a novice from the Dauphiné who was studying in Provence, had written to Vitelleschi as early as 1622. Vitelleschi explained to him, just as he had to Pomo, that as there was no mission, there was little he could do. He likewise told Guérin to focus on his studies and that he should put his faith in divine providence; should he be destined to serve on a mission, he would be called to do so.<sup>92</sup> Giacomo Marcellaia, a novice in Messina, also asked several times to be sent to Ethiopia. While most of his previous letters are now lost, his letter from 28 September 1625 is one of the few letters to name the exact missionary theatre to which he wanted to be sent.<sup>93</sup> In reply, Vitelleschi explained that he was so moved by his desires and was so encouraged to see

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nell'oratione, e procurate il capitale delle virtù, che doverete impiegare nell'Indie. Tenete dunque vivo il fervore [...] non vi scordiate."

<sup>91</sup> ARSI, *Sic.* 9 I, f. 150v./MPOV.37. "La vostra delli 2 di luglio mi ha rallegrato et edificato grandemente per la fervenza della vostra vocatione all'Indie. Havete fatto bene a rinfrescarmene la memoria, se ben io havevo già determinato di mandarvi alla rinfrescata con la benedittione del Signore. State dunque preparato per il viaggio per il quale io scriverò a suo tempo il P. Provinciale, e ringratiate di cuore Dio benedetto d'un tanto beneficio che vi fa."

<sup>92</sup> ARSI, *Lugd.* 4, f. 420r./MPOV.29-30. "Gaudeo te diligenter et religiose tueri pia desideria quae bonus Jesus in animum tuum immisit, quod fieri sole tab iis qui grati esse voluntà, nec divinatorum beneficiorum oblivisci. Fieri quidem iam non potest quod petis neque ullus iam necessarius est longinqua isti missioni. Res igitur committenda est divina providential, cui te totum obedientia duce permittes. Elaborandum autem tibi erit ut virtutes eas compares quas Deus in iis hominibus requirit, quorum opera in servicii functionibus uti solet. Ita fie tut ubicumque te obedientia esse voluerit, tibi et plurimus sis utilis ad divinam gloriam. Quan quoniam habes propositam, non est opus ut plura hic adiungam. Pro me in tuis piorationibus Deum exora."

<sup>93</sup> ARSI, *Fondo Gesuitico* 737/ 306./MPOV.34. "Scrivo a S.R. questa per supplicarla novamente di ciò, che più volte gli scrissi intorno alla mia vocat<sup>e</sup> per l'Ethiopia, non perche dubitassi che se n'habbia in qualche modo scordato, ma solo per sodisfare all'affetto mio, e fiducia, con la quale m'è concesso ricorrere a S.R., come a P<sup>re</sup>; tanto più che in altre sue l<sup>re</sup> passate diedemi certa speranza, che se occorresse, di provvedere detta missione d'operarij, senz'haurebbe ricordato di me, et haurebbe potuto tal sorte toccare ancor'a me fra gl'altri."

Marcellaia's eagerness to save souls that he put him on the short list of candidates whom he would consider for a future mission to Ethiopia.<sup>94</sup> Vitelleschi also had to temper the spirits of Biaggio Chiappesi, Marcellaia's peer in Messina, who had been writing to him since at least 1620. As with Pomo, Guérin, and Marcellaia, Vitelleschi explained to Chiappesi that he was very encouraged by his eagerness, but that there was no mission at that time. He implored him to calm himself and that, when a mission was called, he would be kept in mind. In the meantime, he should pray for guidance and tranquility.<sup>95</sup> And, like the others, his time would eventually come.

Vitelleschi's correspondences with novices concerning their fitness to serve on missions demonstrate a level of intellectual dissonance within the Society. While their eagerness to be called to missionize and spread the faith was welcomed, and was the result of a specific aspect of the Jesuit educational program, it nevertheless remained the idealized path that novices believed they were expected to take as they matured in their studies. Vitelleschi embraced the interests they showed in venturing off a faraway lands in hopes of converting the infidel or saving the apostate, as he knew that these young novices would eventually be poised to carry forth the missionary objectives of the Society. But he also knew that they were not ready; he pushed them to become missionaries but was sure to remind them to mull over exactly what that meant. While the martyr-missionary narrative was an essential component of a novice's vocational training, its idealization caused a tension between the Jesuit educational mission and

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<sup>94</sup> ARSI, *Sic. 9 I*, f. 125v, n° 850./MPOV.35. "Del vostro desiderio d'essere mandato in Etiopia ho memoria, e vi farò consideratione, quando si tratterà di mandar gente in tanto mi rallegro di conoscere nel vostro cuore ben fondata questa vocatione, e ne ringratio con tutto l'affetto Deo bened<sup>o</sup>. Ringratiatelo ancora voi, e seguat' a moltiplicar' il capitale delle [...] virtù, e ad acquistare tutto quello, che vi può rendere degno istrumento della mano divina. Con che."

<sup>95</sup> ARSI, *Sic. 9 II* f. 270v./MPOV.36-37. "Se bene nell'electione che si haverà da fare di fresco di quelli che si hanno da mandar'all'Indie, mi sarei ricordato della vostra vocatione; tuttavia stimò che habbiato fatto bene à rinfrescarmene la memoria con la vostra delle 4 stante, e mi rallegro di vedere vivo il vostro fervore. Questa risoluzione ha bisogno di lume dal cielo, e però aiutateci voi con l'oratione, et altri essercitii spirituali appresso Dio benedetto, al quale ancor io mi raccomandarò e farò quanto stimaro, che sia per essere di suo maggior servitio. In tanto etc."



the realities of saving souls. In the end, all four of these novices wound up together, bound for Ethiopia. However, as the next section shows, Vitelleschi's apprehensions about their readiness to go on mission were not just abstract fears about their inexperience; as the mission progressed, and eventually failed, any and all problems that Vitelleschi could have imagined, did. And it put Pomo, Guérin, Marcellaia, and Chiappesi in grave danger.

### **The failed mission to Ethiopia, 1626-1628**

All the while that Vitelleschi was attempting to curb the eagerness of his young novices, he had been planning a mission to further the Jesuits' efforts with the Christians of Ethiopia. The Jesuits were no strangers to Ethiopia, having had been there for the better part of a century.<sup>96</sup> The origins of their presence began with the Portuguese crown's alliance with Ethiopian kings that began in the late fifteenth century. Beginning in the 1550s, Portuguese Jesuits had been sent there on several occasions, and had eventually established a residence there, to convince the Ethiopians to convert to Catholicism in hopes that the Luso-Ethiopian political alliance could be strengthened by religious bonds.<sup>97</sup> But during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent and especially after the Battle of Lepanto in 1570, the Ottomans and Portuguese began waging numerous naval wars in the Arabian Sea that began to threaten the Portuguese crown's ability to maintain its strong ties to Ethiopia.<sup>98</sup> And then, with the death of King Sebastian I in 1578 at the Battle of Alcácer Quibir in Morocco, the Portuguese crown was vacant, only to be filled by

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<sup>96</sup> Leonardo Cohen, *The Missionary Strategies of the Jesuits in Ethiopia (1555-1632)* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009).

<sup>97</sup> Malyn Newitt, "Formal and Informal Empire in the History of Portuguese Expansion," *Portuguese Studies* 17 (January 1, 2001): 1–20.

<sup>98</sup> For more on the maritime rivalry between the Ottomans and Portuguese, cf. Andrew C. Hess, "The Battle of Lepanto and Its Place in Mediterranean History," *Past & Present*, no. 57 (November 1972): 53–73; Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleys*; Guilmartin, "Ideology and Conflict: The Wars of the Ottoman Empire, 1453-1606," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 4 (Spring 1988): 721–747; Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*.

Philip II of Spain in 1580; the Iberian Union, which lasted until 1640, meant that Portugal and its possessions were now part of the sprawling Hapsburg empire and thus cast into the bitter Hapsburg-Ottoman rivalry. The result was that Portugal's position in the Indian Ocean was now at its weakest point. By the 1620s, using Portuguese ships to get to Ethiopia seemed less secure than it had fifty years prior.

Nevertheless, Vitelleschi still desired to send Jesuits to Ethiopia in hopes that they could save the Ethiopians' souls by uniting them with Rome. But the mission had to be disconnected from the political aims of the Spanish crown that controlled Portugal's empire.<sup>99</sup> And Vitelleschi believed he had found the means to do so. He planned to rely on his old ally who had helped with the planning of residences in the Levant, Philippe de Harlay, Comte de Césy, the French ambassador in Constantinople. While Ethiopia had historically been a Portuguese arena of missionary activity, Vitelleschi decided that, if any true success in terms of evangelization devoid of politics was ever to come out of Ethiopia, it would have to be through the French, who had little political interest in the region. Césy happily aided the Jesuits, writing to Louis XIII on 16 June 1626 requesting royal approval of passports for four Jesuits.<sup>100</sup> By 28 February 1627, Césy sent news to Rome that passports had been granted, and that the Jesuits were to disguise themselves as French merchants passing down the Nile, whereupon they could leave Ottoman lands and proceed on their mission. He further explained to Vitelleschi that he would continue to aid in any way he could, and that the French consul in Alexandria, a priest named Gabriel

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<sup>99</sup> For more on the political ties between Portugal and the Society of Jesus, cf. Dauril Alden's magisterial *The Making of an Enterprise*.

<sup>100</sup> Bibliothèque nat. Paris Mss. Fr. 16150 fol. 524v. "Je suis sur le point d'envoyer des passeport du Grand Seigneur pour faire passer en Ethiopie des Pères Jésuites sous le nom de marchands français, par l'Egypte." Quoted in Antoine Rabbath, *Documents inédits*, 5-6n1.

Fernoulx, was aware of their imminent arrival and would be a great asset in helping the Jesuits pass through Egypt without issue.<sup>101</sup>

By 1 July 1627, Vitelleschi had selected Giacomo Marcellaia, Giuseppe Pomo, Aymar Guérin, and Biaggio Chiappesi for the mission; and they were to set off for Alexandria at once.<sup>102</sup> Vitelleschi decided that Marcellaia, the eldest of the quartet, was to serve as the superior of the mission. Vitelleschi explained to Marcellaia that he expected unity among the four, and that “your superiority does not consist in commanding, so much as in exercising care, serving and sympathizing to everyone with the most great affect of a true Father.”<sup>103</sup> Vitelleschi also worried about the imprudent Pomo. He explained to Marcellaia that he had written to Pomo, imploring him to seek peace and union with his companions, and above all to obey Marcellaia. Under Marcellaia’s leadership, they set off for Alexandria, arriving in mid-August. While the mission had French as well as papal support, not everyone was so enthusiastic, especially the Jesuits’ rivals, the Venetians and the Franciscans. Shortly after the Jesuits’ arrival, Alvisè Correr, the Venetian consul, wrote to Doge Giovanni Corner in angst. It is unclear how their assumed

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<sup>101</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 102, f. 86r-87v./MPOV.46-47. “J’envoye par cet ordinayre a V.S. R<sup>me</sup> les commandements du grand Turc que i’ay obtenus pour fayre passer quelques peres de V<sup>re</sup> Societé sous le nom de marchants françoys en Aethiopie par voye d’Alexandrie et du Cayre, quy fera espargner beaucoup de chemin et de peyne a ceulx quy seront employés a cette mission... Et revenant au petit nombre quy est contenu dedans ie diray a V<sup>re</sup> S. R<sup>me</sup> que Mr. Farnoulx consul françoys en Egipte très habile homme et tres zelé pourra moyenner le passage dun plus grand nombre et tous les ans en fera glisser quelques uns, aven un peu de donatives legeres au Bacha du Cayre et des frontieres des Abissins...” It should be noted that it was not rare for the French to send an ecclesiastic to serve as consul in the Near East given crown’s interests in being the defending of the faith.

<sup>102</sup> Originally, Chiappesi was to be sent to Japan, and Marco Stella was to go to Ethiopia. However, Vitelleschi ordered Chiappesi to replace Stella when the mission to Japan fell through. Cf. ARSI, Sic 9 II, f. 316v-317r./MPOV.48-49. “Ha V.R. fatto ben’a ricordarmi con la sua delli 25 d’Aprile il suo desiderio d’andar al Giappone, e grandemente mi rallegrò di scorgere in lei vivo questo santo fervore. Adesso non ci è occasione di metterlo in essecutione, ma io me ne ricorderò, e mi sarà caro che le [.....]forte V.R. raccomandandi continuamente al Signore questo punto e si Ricordi di operare con diligenza dovunque sara posta dalla santa obediaientia imaginandosi di esser nel Giappone. Con che.” Cf. also ARSI, Sic 9 II, f. 325v./MPOV.55-56. “L’allegrezza che V.R. mostra della sua elezione per l’Etiopia mi da speranza che il Signore l’haveva destinata in quelle parti, dove si servirà delle opera sua con molto accrescimento del suo divino servitio.”

<sup>103</sup> ARSI, Sic 9 II, f. 325r./MPOV.56-57. “Scrivo al P. Pumo essortandolo all’unione, et subordinazione, ma è necessario che V.R. ancora aiuti dal canto suo, considerando, che la sua superiorità non consiste tanto nel comandare, quanto in esser citar la carità servendo et compatendo à tutti con grandissimo affetto di vero Padre, et intorno alle licenze del P. Pumo, V.R. lo le faccia mostrare.”

identities were exposed, but Correr knew that the four newly-arrived merchants were in fact Jesuits, and they were aided by the French. He also explained that the Franciscans believed that these Jesuits were headed to the Levant to try again at establishing a residence there.<sup>104</sup>

But this was not their goal; while Correr was lamenting the Jesuits' plans to set off for Jerusalem, the four Jesuits headed south from Cairo for the city of Girga on the upper Nile, some 500 kilometers away. After twenty-five days' journey, they finally arrived in Girga around 21 January 1628. Marcellaia went into great detail describing what he saw. He explained that this part of Egypt was a "land of Copts, in which no Muslim can live an entire year." He went on to praise the Copts for their monasteries and other ancient monuments that demonstrated their piety.<sup>105</sup> While in Girga, they were supposed to greet the bey, the local Ottoman ruler. However, he was not in the city, so they sought to venture out to greet him under the protection of a janissary and a Maltese surgeon named Giacomo Chidoni, who was to serve as interpreter. They finally reached the bey, and Marcellaia met with him and spoke with him about their mission. Marcellaia was warmly received and was given advice for how to proceed safely to Ethiopia. He wrote that, after leaving the bey with his blessing for a safe voyage, everything seemed to be going well. With French passports and Ottoman protection, Marcellaia was confident that they would reach the edges of the Ottoman Empire and pass safely into Ethiopian territory, away from the threats and machinations of their many enemies.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> ASVe, *Dispacci Consoli Alessandria e Cairo*, fasc. n°2, letter n° 9./MPOV.59. "Or me ne danno propria occasione quatro Giesuiti capitati in questa città già due giorni venuti da Constantinopoli in habito secolare, proveduti di grossa summa di argento, spargendo voce di dover passar nell'Abess. Questi padri francescani però gli hanno intercetta una lettera dalla quale si comprende più tosto che siano destinati per Terra Santa."

<sup>105</sup> ARSI, *Sic 184 I*, f. 18r./MPOV.76. "Vi è fra l'altre una terra tutta di Christiani del paese (cioè Cofti), dentro la quale niuno Mahumettano può vivere un'anno intiero. Oltre i monasteri che si veggono et altri Christiani in grosso numero, vi è anco abbondanza di vivere e varie cose da vedere di notabile memoria e antichità."

<sup>106</sup> ARSI, *Sic 184 I*, f. 18rv./MPOV.78.

But it never happened. While Marcellaia was busy meeting with the bey, someone had informed Bayram Pasha, the Ottoman governor of Egypt, that the Jesuits were not who they appeared to be. Not only were they not French merchants, but it was alleged that one of the four Jesuits was a nephew of the pope, and another was the son of a great Spanish prince. To make matters worse, they were accused of being Hapsburg spies who sought to convert Muslims in order to incite a rebellion that would seemingly take down Ottoman power in Egypt.<sup>107</sup> On 26 January, the Jesuits were seized and their papers scoured for evidence of the alleged plot. They were then escorted to jail, where they were interrogated. When asked where they were from, Guérin said that he was from Romans, in France. But the inquisitors, knowing very little of European geography, felt that Romans sounded an awful lot like Rome, and that this Guérin must certainly be an agent of the pope.<sup>108</sup> So, they were then sent off to Cairo to be presented before Bayram Pasha; unable to carry forth to Ethiopia, they were deeply saddened that the mission to Ethiopia had failed so quickly.<sup>109</sup>

They arrived in Cairo on 11 February and were met by guards of the governor, who escorted them to prison. It was dark and damp, and they were cast in with countless prisoners. With no money for ransom and little hope of being released, they reckoned they would have to “sleep that night on the bare earth, without covers and without food,” and perhaps this would be

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<sup>107</sup> ARSI, *Sic 184 I*, f. 18v./MPOV.78-79. “Il modo che tenne detta persona fu il negoziare privatamente con certo giannizzero, che seco dimorava, che suggerisse al Bascià del Cairo essere fra noi uno nipote del Papa et un altro figlio d’uno gran prencipe di Spagna, che con lettere secrete andavano per convertire i musulmini (cioè loro) alla nostra fede e per sollevare quel regno contro loro, e che per tale fine portavamo con noi 10000 zicchini e più, essendo anco noi persone tali, dalli quali poteva cavarsi grossissima somma di racatto.”

<sup>108</sup> Rabath, *Documents inédits*, 19-20/MPOV.144. “Car, interrogé de son paijs natal, il respondit qu’il estoit de Romans; a ce mot les Turcs, qui ne sont pas les mellieurs geographes de monde, & qui neantmoins ont souvent oüy parler de Rome comme de la ville capitale de la chrestienté & siege du pape, lequel ils ont en Excracion s’imaginanta que tout ce que les Princes chrestiens ont entrepris contra la Tyrannie des Ottomans a esté conclu sur ces propositions & execute selon ses orders, commencerent a crier: Rome, pape, pape, Rome.”

<sup>109</sup> ARSI, *Sic 184 I*, f. 18v-19r./MPOV.79-81.

where they would become protagonists in their own martyr-missionary saga.<sup>110</sup> But after a few days, they were moved to another prison, which was slightly better than the previous one. Shortly thereafter, Bayram Pasha interrogated them, and demanded the letters proving that they were Hapsburg-papal spies. But, obviously, they possessed nothing of the sort; Marcellaia simply told the governor that they were doing only what Christians were allowed to do in Turkish lands: “search for alms and help Christians in their faith.”<sup>111</sup> At this point, the pasha asked Guérin if he had ever been to Constantinople or Cairo prior to this; he then questioned him about his nationality, as the “spy from Rome” was still suspected of wrongdoing. They were then remanded, only to appear before him a few days after. When they came before Bayram Pasha again, it was Pomo’s turn to be vetted. After a janissary said Pomo was a Spaniard, the pasha ordered Pomo to read a Portuguese letter that he had intercepted from Jesuits in Ethiopia. But Pomo tried to explain that he did not know Portuguese; and he certainly was not Spanish. They tried to reason with him, explaining that “knowing one [language] does not suppose the understanding of all the others, and that, although we know the characters similar to Italian, Latin, French, etc., we however do not understand the force and significance of Portuguese words.” After this, Bayram Pasha questioned them further on their nationalities, and then had them thrown back to their cells after he did not receive the answers he desired.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> ARSI, *Sic 184 I*, f. 19r./MPOV.82. “Vennero all’ultimo li prigionieri per porci li piedi alli ceppi e già li havevano posti a 2 di noi, pensando forse che per liberarci haveressimo pagato alcun danaro; ma vedendo che noi nulla havevamo, mossi a pietà ci lasciarono liberi a dormire quella notte nella nuda terra, senza coperta e senza cibo.”

<sup>111</sup> ARSI, *Sic 184 I*, f. 19r./MPOV.83. “Dissimo noi che lettere del Papa non havevamo, sebene conform l’uso loro Dervisi (o religiosi) e di altri nostri frati che vengono e vanno a i Luoghi Santi, andavamo ancor noi caminando per il mondo mandati da nostri superiori per cercare il vivere d’elemosine et agiutare li christiani nella fede...”

<sup>112</sup> ARSI, *Sic 184 I*, f. 19v./MPOV.84. “Si che, chiariti di me, chiamorno l’altri miei compagni e presero il padre Pomo a farlo leggere, e cominciando lui a pronunciare alcune cose, disse il ginaizzero (di cui sopra) al Bascià: Sigore, questo qui è spagnuolo. Allora, voltandomi a lui: Perché ardisci di dire una falsità tale al principe: vuoi che vi vada la mia o la tua testa, se egli non è spagnuolo? Subito arrossitosi e posto in colera, si voltò in dietro, ributtandolo anco per il braccio il nostro Agà. Vedendo dopo questo che ne pure il padre Pomo sapeva leggerle,

It is not clear what would have happened if no one came to the Jesuits' aid. But, after forty days in prison, the four were freed after Fernoulx paid a hefty ransom of six thousand reals. Fernoulx borrowed some of the money from a French merchant, César Lambert; but the majority of it came from Jewish money lenders at interest rates between twenty and twenty-four percent.<sup>113</sup> The Jesuits had tried to dissuade him from doing so, asking him to wait for word from Césy; but the missionaries' poor state and their treatment in prison worried him gravely, and he paid the ransom.<sup>114</sup> After their liberation, Fernoulx and the Jesuits began piecing together exactly how the mission went awry. As they had French protection and paperwork to prove it, someone must have convinced Bayram Pasha to seize them under false pretences. The Jesuits' usual enemies were eliminated as suspects almost immediately. While the Venetians were apprehensive about the Jesuits' presence, once it was clear they were not going to the Holy Land, Correr no longer had incentive to bother them, nor did the Franciscans. While he kept the doge and the senate informed about the goings on surrounding the Jesuits, he had nothing to do with their arrest.<sup>115</sup> And as the Dutch and English did not have the political clout in Egypt to convince the governor of much of anything, it was doubtful that they were the instigators of the arrest either.

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disse certo Granatino: Come non sanno leggere queste lettere, persone come siete voi, theologi e pratici dell'evangelo. Gli fu detto che il sapere una cosa non supponeva la scienza di tutte l'altre, e che, sebene conoscevamo li caratteri simili all'italiano, latino, francese, etc., non però sentivamo la forza et il significato delle parole portoghese. Vollero sapere dopo li paesi di ciascuno, e chi avesse presso certo horologio espresso nelle nostre lettere: e fatto ciò ci rimandò in carcere..."

<sup>113</sup> The attestation of Fernoulx's debts explains that 2000 reals were borrowed at twenty-four percent, 3000 at twenty percent, both from Jewish bankers. The remainder was borrowed from César Lambert, a French merchant. ARSI, *Sic 184 I*, f. 16r-17v./MPOV.98-100.

<sup>114</sup> ARSI, *Sic 184 I*, f. 14v./MPOV.91. "La spesa che il Signore console ha per noi fatta e per liberarci, fu di sei mila reali, conforme l'altra mia lettera che scrissi a Sua Paternità, li quali prese a 20 e 24 per cento a l'anno da certi Hebrei e di buonissimo mercato al solito del paese, e si ritrova in grande confusione il poverello, per esser egli sacerdote e non havere altro qui che 500 reali l'anno per sua spesa; e se voleva udire la diceria della gente, ci haverebbe lasciati ad ogni evento, persuadendolo gran parte che non spendesse per noi alcuna cosa, perche sarebbe dall'intutto persa, come pure successe in Constantinopoli (dicevano) co'l ambasciatore."

<sup>115</sup> ASVe, *Dispacci Consoli Alessandria e Cairo*, fasc. n°2, letter n° 11./MPOV.64.

The source of the intrigue was shocking indeed: Gabriel Fernoulx himself. As the consul, it was his duty to protect the interests of European merchants in Egypt, especially their trades and their viability to carry them out. But he was also a priest. He had many problems with the slave trade in Alexandria, and did little to protect slavers. One of these men who greatly despised Fernoulx for this reason was Giovanni Battista Ortone, a Greek slave trader out of Malta.<sup>116</sup> Marcellaia explained to Vitelleschi that Ortone was bitter that Fernoulx had refused to protect his interests in Egypt, and had decided to seek revenge against his enemy by telling the Ottomans that the Jesuits were Spanish spies who sought to incite a rebellion in Egypt.<sup>117</sup> While the truth was that Jesuits were uninvolved in any such plot, Bayram Pasha imprisoned them. And it was also a great opportunity to extort a large amount of money from the French, as it was only after Fernoulx raised the absurd sum of six thousand reals that they were freed. In addition to the ransom, the Jesuits were to leave Egypt immediately and to abandon their plans to go to Ethiopia, showing that Bayram Pasha's anxieties about European missionaries were partly why Ortone was able to convince him of the Jesuits' alleged plans in the first place.<sup>118</sup>

One man who did not lose sleep over this was Alvise Correr. Although he had distanced himself from the situation lest he get ensnared in it, he happily wrote to Venice that the Jesuits

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<sup>116</sup> For more on the ties between pirates, Malta, Greeks, and their position in the Mediterranean world, cf. Molly Greene, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants: A Maritime History of the Mediterranean* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010). For more on slaving in the early modern Mediterranean, cf. Robert Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters*.

<sup>117</sup> ARSI, *Sic 184 I*, f. 14r./MPOV.89. "E per sapere più meglio il suo intento e qualità, è per nome detto Giovanni Battista Ortone, nativo di Scio, quale già sono molti anni che fa l'officio di ricomprare i schiavi di questo paese che servono in Malta, con quale licenza qui non si sa: n'ha sebene portati di già 1500 e tuttavia ne porta allo spesso, et è grandemente accetto alla soldatesca del Cairo per detto suo la protettione di alcuno de' consoli." That they were Spanish spies comes from a letter by Fernoulx to Vitelleschi, dated 14 February 1629. "Oultre les sudictes six mil piastres se sont faictes plusieurs autres despenses, a scavoit, au geniserre quy alla accuser lesdictes peres par ordre de Jehan Baptiste ortonne, donnant entendre au passa qu'ils estoient espie du Roj despaigne, et que entre eux y avoit un grand personnage, lui fast donne trante p. pour le faire taire affin quil ne fisse davantage de mal..."

<sup>118</sup> Rabath MPOV.155. "Après le festes Monsieur le Consul les fit monter sur duex tartans pour retourner en Chrestienté car une des conditions de leur liberté estoit qu'ils vuideroient de toute l'Egypte dans le temps assigné."



were sent back to Alexandria and summarily deported in late May. By mid July, they were back in Europe.<sup>119</sup>

Vitelleschi had quite the mess on his hands. In addition to having to sort out what had happened, he also owed Fernoulx a small fortune. As Fernoulx himself was a priest with only 500 reals as an annual stipend, it would take him years to pay off the high-interest debt.<sup>120</sup> Therefore, the debt fell on the Society. But Vitelleschi had to assure the four missionaries that the debt would not fall on them. He wrote to all four explaining that the debt was not theirs, and that it they should remove thoughts of it from their minds. In a letter to Guérin, who was back in Lyon, Vitelleschi explained that he was happy that the Jesuits were able to be freed from danger thanks to Fernoulx. But the debt was to fall on the provincial of France.

He also added that while he was thankful for Guérin's efforts on the mission, for now, plans to go to Ethiopia should be abandoned.<sup>121</sup> He had the same advice for Pomo. Always eager to serve on missions, Pomo had written to Vitelleschi shortly after his return that he wanted to be sent back. Vitelleschi explained to him that unfortunately that was not possible. He ordered Pomo to "attend to your studies, and pray to the Lord that he instill in you his holy will."<sup>122</sup>

The next step was assuring Fernoulx that he too should not worry about the debt, and that Vitelleschi himself would ensure that it was paid off. He wrote to the provincial of Sicily,

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<sup>119</sup> ASVe, *Dispacci Consoli Alessandria e Cairo*, fasc. n°2, letter n° 13./MPOV.104. "Alli Giesuiti di quali già scrissi a Vestra Serenità, questo Bassà non ha voluto dar il passo per l'Etiopia ma gl'hà rimandati per via di Alessandria spellati. Queste sono materie poco proprie di precenti tempi. Onde senza più."

<sup>120</sup> ARSI, *Sic 184 I*, f. 14v./MPOV.91.

<sup>121</sup> ARSI, *Lugd. 5*, f. 555v./MPOV.105. "Quod V.R. petit a me facultatem ut si quid sibi a notis et amicis offerretur ad persolvendam redemptionem, id posit accipere, agit ea de re cum P. Provinciali, sine Cuius consilio et autoritate in eo negotio nihil aget. Caeterum laudo religiosam ipsius voluntatem promptitudinem animi a Domino quo se non modo ad missionem Aethiopicam, necdum etiam ad quodcumque aliud ministerium offert. Accipiet a divina providential quod superiors commodum illo iudicaverint, quomodo ductum ut hactenus fecit secuta meritum suum auget plurimum et ornari petivit."

<sup>122</sup> ARSI, *Sic 9 I*, f. 14v./MPOV.249. "Ho la lettera di V.R. delli 25 di Giugno, e grandemente me edifico della sua perseveranza nel pensiero d'andar all'Indie. Resta solo, che ne lasci a me la cura, et ella, senza pensare ad altro, attenda alli suoi studii, e pregare il Signore che si faccia in lui la sua santa volontà."

Giordano Cascino, asking him if he could help the French provincial with the debt. As three of the Jesuits came from his province, Vitelleschi thought it was only logical that the Sicilian province bear some of the burden. He explained to Cascino that “however much your reverence will be able to do to help pay the debt that we have for the rescue of ours in Cairo” would be greatly appreciated.<sup>123</sup> He wrote again to Guérin, ordering him to write to Fernoulx to assure him that the French Jesuits would be supporting him financially for his efforts to rescue the Jesuits from prison, and that he should not worry about the debts that are not truly his.<sup>124</sup>

By February 1629, Fernoulx had grown anxious. He had yet to receive word from Vitelleschi about when the money would arrive. His creditors had not received payment and were becoming rather impatient. Furthermore, with such high interest rates, it behooved Vitelleschi to pay the debt as quickly as possible.<sup>125</sup> Fernoulx was understandably anxious. After all, the failed mission and its debts had fallen on him. While Vitelleschi said that he planned to pay him back, the money was not there; and the creditors were knocking on his door, not Vitelleschi's. He explained that he felt he was not asking for much from the Jesuits:

I ask nothing, only that the reverend father general of the Society of Jesus and all other prelates send to me the same charity and affection that I have shown these

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<sup>123</sup> ARSI, *Sic.* 9 I f. 248v./MPOV.106. “Quanto V.R. potrà fare per aiuto à pagare il debito che habbiamo per il riscatto de nostri [...] nel Cairo, tutto sarà sua molta carità, e potrà tenerlo da parte, sin che da me sarà avisata; per che saremo necessitati a pagare se non riuscirà il partito che si [...] in francia. In tanto V.R. non dia licenza al P. Pumo di cercare per questa causa senza ricommand [...] a V.R. come ancor io gli ho scritto, accioche non dia fastidio a parenti.”

<sup>124</sup> ARSI, *Lugd.* 5 Ep. *Generalium* 1623-1632 f. 561r./MPOV.109. “Sed ab eo tempore scriptum est ad me Parisiis viduam domini de Breves ad quam pertinet Vice Consulem deligere, libenter concedere ut dominus Fernoux in eodem munere perseveret. Id si verum est, primo quoque tempore V.R. scribet ad dominum farnoux et significabit de re tota, et quanta cura elbaoratum est a nobis ut istud officium illi addiceretur et deinceps conservatur. Praeterea scribet ad me clare et certo quod de summa illi debita pro liberatione partum, vel ille promiserit, vel faciendum videatur, ut conemur id praestare quod, cognito penitusque perspecto illo negotio, acquirissimum et necessarium esse videbitur.”

<sup>125</sup> ARSI, *Gall.* 98 II f. 522r./MPOV.116. “Vous me donnez esperansse par vos dictes lettres que je receprvaj se que j’ay employé pour leur delibransse, quj est une notable somme, comme vous scavez, laquelle me falut emprumter a gros interest comme les mesmes peres scavent. J’avois esperansse de recuovrer sest somme advant le temps quil mela faut paier. Mais je ne voi rien e le temps est proche, se quj me met en grande apprehension, car je naj nul moien dy puouvoir satisfaire, et me faudra de prolonger le temps e les interest croitront dadavantage.”

fathers and relieve me of my commitment, in order that the usurers not multiply and that I not suffer some great hardship for having rescued the fathers of their Society.<sup>126</sup>

By September 1629, when the money still had not arrived, Fernoulx's tone with Vitelleschi grew increasingly tense. He explained to Vitelleschi that he lived in "the land of the infidel" and did him a personal favor in freeing the Jesuits. If he did not receive recompense soon, he would have no choice but to go as far as petitioning the king. This would no longer be a personal debt between Vitelleschi and Fernoulx; it would become an issue between France and the Society, and Vitelleschi knew full well that that could harm the Jesuits' relationship with the most Christian king.<sup>127</sup>

In the end, the debt was paid. The culprit of the conspiracy, Giovanni Battista Ortone had died in Malta in 1628.<sup>128</sup> And Aymar Guérin had succumbed to the plague in Lyons on 29 November of that same year.<sup>129</sup> The other three had returned to their studies and other vocations in Sicily. By 1630, the failed mission to Ethiopia was in the past. But dreams of a return did not fade. Marcellaia continued to preoccupy himself with a potential return to Ethiopia, and wrote a long treatise giving practical information concerning travel to Ethiopia via Egypt in light of his experiences. Despite the failure, he remained convinced that it was via the French that the journey could be successful. Whether it was obtaining a passport from the French ambassador in Constantinople in order to ensure freedom of travel or going to see the consul in Alexandria in

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<sup>126</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II* f. 524r./MPOV.119. "...je ne demande rien, sulement je prie le reverend pere general de la Compagnie de Jesus et tout autres prelates dicelle duser envers moy de la mesme charite et affection que jaj usee envers les peres et de me delibvrir au plustost de mon Engagement, affin que les usures ne multiplient et que je ne soufre quelque grand travail pour en avoir delibvre des peres de leur Compagnie."

<sup>127</sup> ARSI, *Gall 98 II* f. 517r./MPOV.120. "Considerz, Monsieur, je vous prie, que je suis en pais d'Infidellez parmi le quelz ni a ni charité ni humanité. J'y exerce a mon regret une charge publique. Si je ne donne satisfaction jen serai reprine, car l'honneur du Roy y seroit interesse, et estant chargé de debtez comme je suis faut de necessite que beaucoup de choses patiensent pour navoir moien dy remedier."

<sup>128</sup> ARSI, *Gall. 98 II* f. 522r./MPOV.116. "On nous dict. icy que se gallant homme qui a causé tant de mal aux pères et a este cause quilz nont continué leur voyage, est mort a Malte."

<sup>129</sup> ARSI, *Lugd 39 Necrol. 1620-1760* f. 36r./MPOV.113.

order to get his approval to go as far the edges of the Ottoman Empire, the Jesuits were to wed themselves to the French and rely on their diplomatic and mercantile networks. They were to sail for Alexandria on a French ship with a letter of approval from the King of France himself and reside with the French whenever possible. But there was one innovation that Marcellaia believed was essential. Rather than disguising themselves as merchants, they should under all circumstances dress as pilgrims, not hide the fact that they were priests, and perform Mass for those who desired spiritual aid. It was perhaps this, Marcellaia believed, that alarmed Bayram Pasha the most.<sup>130</sup> Had they been honest about their intentions, they may not have wound up in prison. But then again, for the bribe, it may not matter that much.

## Conclusions

Vitelleschi never attempted to send Jesuits back to Ethiopia via Egypt. And in 1634, the Ethiopian emperor Fasilides banished Catholic Patriarch Afonso Mendes, a Jesuit, and restored the traditional Orthodox Church as the only accepted church; this ended the Jesuit presence in Ethiopia for a generation.<sup>131</sup> But despite the mission's original objective, it tells us far more about Ottoman Egypt and the Jesuits' experience there than it does about religious life in Ethiopia. And with the exception of the residences in the Levant, efforts to return to the Christian Orient died down after 1630. Vitelleschi had come to recognize the difficulties that came along with attempting to gain a foothold in the Ottoman Empire. It also became clear that the Christian Orient itself was not monolithic. The Levantine residences were relatively successful and sustained themselves throughout the rest of the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century. And work with the Maronites continued uninterrupted with the Maronite College; eventually those

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<sup>130</sup> ARSI, *Goa 39 I*, f. 42r-44v./MPOV.156-165.

<sup>131</sup> Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 40.

books were printed, and the Latinization process of the Maronites progressed. But efforts with groups like the Greeks, Armenians, Copts, and Jacobites remained futile. And Egypt remained hostile territory.

But the problems that afflicted Vitelleschi and the Jesuits' efforts in the Christian Orient only partly were related to the amenability of the various Christian sects. The real issues facing their efforts in the Christian Orient centered on the macro-political realities of the first half of the seventeenth century. A big part of this was the larger implications of the Thirty Years' War and the subsequent formation of alliances that resulted in the Jesuits having to wed themselves to France in order to perform their missions in the Near East. As the Habsburgs remained the Ottomans' and France's fiercest mutual enemy, the two aligned themselves in an unholy bond against the Austro-Iberian Habsburgs that ran contrary to the prevailing rhetoric of the kings of France as the most Christian monarchs. But after 1623, when the decidedly pro-French Urban VIII came to the throne of Saint Peter, the French finally could wrestle Rome from the clutches of Madrid and claim that they defended the interests of the Church.<sup>132</sup> And helping the Jesuits likewise gave the kings of France further evidence to prove how serious they were about being the most Catholic monarchs. They positioned themselves as both defenders of the interests of Christians everywhere as well as pragmatic heads of state.<sup>133</sup>

But there was more to it than these larger diplomatic networks. Vitelleschi's generalate also exposes the Jesuits' continual reliance upon a complex web of local patronage networks and the Ottoman officials' goodwill in order to achieve their goals. In the Levant, they needed the Ottomans' approval as well as the cooperation and patronage of others, not to mention the

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<sup>132</sup> Dandeleit, *Spanish Rome*, 105-108.

<sup>133</sup> This culminates in the reign of Louis XIV. An interesting work that depicts this fusion of a Christian monarchy and pragmatic statecraft is Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

mercantile networks that brought people and wealth to Aleppo, in order to stay afloat. And as the failure to establish a residence in Jerusalem showed, intrigues on the part of the Franciscans and Venetians could be enough to prevent them from sustaining themselves. And much like with Eliano during the first two missions to Egypt, Jesuits always found a way to spend a significant amount of time in Ottoman prisons. Whether it was due to malcontented Jews in 1562, a disgruntled French diplomat in 1582, or a bitter Greek slaver in 1627, the Jesuit experience in Egypt always seemed to take a wrong turn; there was always someone in Egypt who sought to undo their efforts for personal reasons, resulting in their imprisonment. While the bribes always carried accusations that struck at the heart of the Ottomans' anxieties concerning foreigners (plots of rebellion and impending Habsburg-Papal invasions), the Jesuits were nevertheless victims of individuals' intrigues.

And these personal motives and individual connections interfered with the Jesuits' efforts because the Jesuits had no other choice but to rely on others for their protection. France was on the ascent in Europe in the seventeenth century. While New World gold and silver ran out and Spain bankrupted itself, and Germany and England tore themselves apart in protracted civil wars, France positioned itself to come out of the Peace of Westphalia as the dominant power of Europe. As the Ottoman Empire's main European ally, they were also in the best position to assist the Jesuits in the Christian Orient. But the relatively weak positions of French diplomats like Césy and Fernoulx demonstrated that the French were assuredly still the junior partner of that alliance. Relying overwhelmingly on the French meant that the Jesuits' position in the Christian Orient was only as secure as their patrons', that is to say, not very. All it took to unravel the Jesuits' efforts was to bribe the right official and convince him that the Jesuits were not who they said they were, truth notwithstanding. This exposes the weak position of the

French. French diplomats like Deshayes, Lempereur, Césy, and Fernoulx relied heavily on the Ottoman officials' benevolence to allow those whom they represented, the Jesuits included, to live freely and unmolested in the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans just as easily ignored those privileges when it suited them; the French paid dearly for this, as when Fernoulx had to accrue a massive debt and subsequently be chased by creditors in order to defend his interests. While the Jesuits lacked any other viable option, and had to rely on the French if they were to succeed, the likelihood of success remained tenuous at best. In the end, the Jesuits did not gain a foothold in the Christian Orient under Vitelleschi because they were forced to rely on networks that neither they nor their patrons controlled. As long as this was the case, the Christian Orient would remain what it had always been: a religio-cultural bloc within the realm of the Ottoman world.

## + Conclusion +

### Annual Retreat for the Spiritual Exercises



When I am defended, I remain fertile  
Fields of happy Memphis,  
Celebrated land of most cultivated genius,  
now covered by all its raging floodwaters  
founded along the Nile;  
Hence, you bring forth abundant richness of the earth,  
About to yield noble profit:  
May the harvests of Africa prefer their own,  
and Gargara prefer its own:  
Thus may it always remain full for you  
from the nourishing cornucopia,  
When far from bands of profane soldiers,  
and the screeching of troubled concerns,  
We repose, received in the silent bosom of hallowed solitude,  
that may sprout forth capable children,  
and pour out its fruits,  
By whatever means Phoebus sheds beauteous daylight,  
throughout each kingdom of the world:  
Noble folk in this shade, since having been safely secured,  
We preserve the greatest goods.<sup>1</sup>

In 1640, in commemoration of the Society of Jesus's one-hundredth anniversary, the famed Antwerp printing house Plantin Press, which had long specialized in Jesuit books, printed an extravagant and in some sense propagandistic volume of history, poetry, and spiritual peregrinations on the Society of Jesus in its first century called the *Imago primi saeculi*

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<sup>1</sup> Johannes Bolland et al., *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu: a prouincia Flandro-Belgica eiusdem Societatis repraesentata* (Antwerp: Ex officina Plantiniana Balthasaris Moreti, 1640), 201. "Recessus annuus ad vacandum spiritualibus exercitiis/ Dum condor, fecundor. Felicis arva Mempheos, cultissimi / Celebrata tellus ingeni, / Nunc aestuosis occupata fluctibus / Totoque Nilo condita; / Unde uberis pinguedinem glebae trahis, / Datura fenus nobile: / Quod esse messes Africae malint suum, / Suumque malint Gargara: / Sic semper almo manet ad plenum tibi / Opulenta cornu copia, / Ut a profanis expediti coetibus, / Strepituque curarum procul, / Sanctae recepti solitudinis sinu / Silentio recondimus, / Quod efficaci germinet propagine, / Fructusque diffundat suos, / Quaecumque pulchrum dividit Phoebus diem, / Per utramque mundi regiam: / In hoc latendo nobiles, quod conditi / Opima condimus bona."



*Societatis Iesu*. Commissioned by Mutio Vitelleschi as a part of Society's centennial jubilee, *Imago primi saeculi* is divided into five parts that focus on the growth of the Society and look at the evolution of its maturity through the five stages of "life": birth (*Nascens*), growth (*Crescens*), labor (*Agens*), suffering (*Patiens*), and the honored state of the Society on its one-hundredth birthday (*Honorata*). The goal was to exult the Society of Jesus and cast it in a light similar to the exultation of Jesus, who, through birth, maturity, labors, and suffering, was honored as the Savior of Man.<sup>2</sup> Included in *Nascens* is 'Dum condor, fecundor,' a poem about the richness and abundance of the Nile, accompanied by an etching of the Nile's lush floodplain [Figure 4].

By the end of the seventeenth century, the Nile had come to play a significant allegorical role in early modern Catholicism's global vision, as the Nile was seen as a source of life and fecundity, much like the Church. This imagery of the Nile as a source of fecundity in

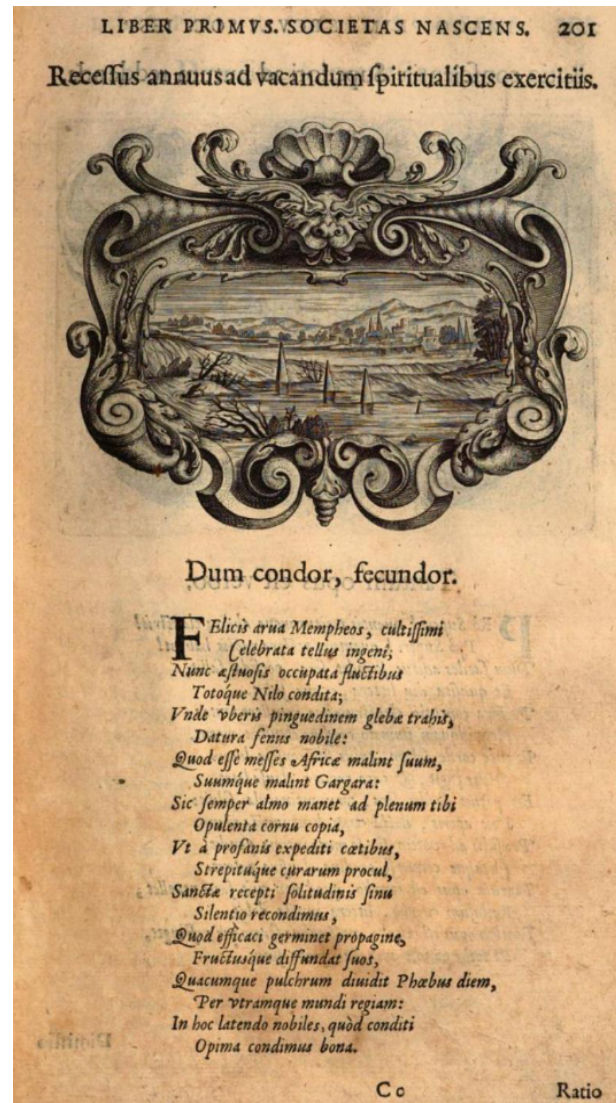


Figure 4. "Dum condor, fecundor," *Imago primi saeculi* (1640)

need of preservation became an important trope in baroque art. Much of this came through Pope Innocent X's urban renewal of Rome, which sought to rejuvenate the city and represent Rome as

<sup>2</sup> For more on this, cf. Lydia Salviucci Insolera, *L'Imago primi saeculi (1640) e il significato dell'immagine allegorica nella Compagnia di Gesù: genesi e fortuna del libro* (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2004).

the capital of the first true global faith. Included in this program was Gian Lorenzo Bernini's 1651 Fountain of the Four Rivers in Piazza Navona, which depicts the Nile as one of the world's great rivers, along with the Danube, Ganges, and the Río de la Plata, that had been tamed by missionary endeavors of the papacy.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 5. Andrea Pozzo, *Apotheosis of Saint Ignatius*, Church of Sant'Ignazio, Rome (1685-1695)

center, Ignatius Loyola is assumed into heaven and unites himself with Christ. In the four corners

Likewise, the Society of Jesus had co-opted the Nile as a pictorial means of expressing its own achievements. Traveling east from Bernini's fountain, past the Pantheon, and toward Rome's major thoroughfare, Via del Corso, the Church of Sant'Ignazio comes into view. Built under Vitelleschi's supervision between 1626 and 1650, the church is dedicated to the founder of the Society of Jesus, whom Pope Gregory XV had canonized in 1623. On the vault of the nave is Andrea Pozzo's fresco of *The Apotheosis of Saint Ignatius* [Figure 5]. At the

<sup>3</sup> Jean Duffy, "Art, Architecture, and Catholicism in Michel Butor's 'La Modification,'" *The Modern Language Review* 94, no. 1 (January 1, 1999): 55–60. In some cases, the Nile was even paired with the Tiber to show the link between the Nile's fecundity and Rome as the source of life. Cf. Molly Swetnam-Burland, "Egypt Embodied: The Vatican Nile," *American Journal of Archaeology* 113, no. 3 (July 1, 2009): 439–457.

of the fresco, are the four corners of the world. Running clockwise from the upper left are the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Europe, looking inward as Ignatius approaches Christ. Here again is the Nile, with a shroud on its head alluding to the mystery of its source, as the allegory for Africa. This depiction of the Nile, like the others, positions the Nile as a source of life and abundance. And as one of the four corners of the world tamed by the Church, it is a pictorial representation of how the Society of Jesus saw its purpose by 1700, and how that reflected Ignatius's original vision for the order he founded in 1540: the salvation of the souls of the world by uniting the believers' inner selves with Christ.<sup>4</sup>

However, by 1700, the reality of the Society of Jesus as the preeminent missionary order was not exactly what was depicted in the allegorical visions that predominate in these pieces of baroque art. There is a triumphalist rhetoric in these works that positions the Jesuits as the force behind the unification of the globe under Catholicism. However, despite the rhetoric of an empire of souls found in Jesuit triumphalist art,<sup>5</sup> this project has shown how often the Jesuits had to negotiate their place between Rome and the rest of the world. While the Jesuits may have desired to bring Christianity to the four corners of the globe, and they may have propagated their successes in doing so in frescos and devotional texts, the reality was much more about amending their missionary efforts based on the circumstances in which they found themselves. And time and time again, this ran contrary to the wishes of their patrons. Furthermore, the Jesuits met just as many failures as they did successes. While Ignatius's vision for the Jesuits is unified in the center of the Pozzo's fresco, and the orthogonal lines and the *trompe-l'œil* technique of the scene

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<sup>4</sup> Marcello Fagiolo, "The Scene of Glory: The Triumph of the Baroque in the Theatrical Works of the Jesuits," in *The Jesuits and the Arts, 1540-1773*, edited by John O'Malley and Gauvin Bailey (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2005), 229-246. This unity in Christ is central also in Ignatius's personal writings. Cf. Ignatius Loyola, *Personal Writings: Reminiscences, Spiritual Diary, Select Letters Including the Text of The Spiritual Exercises* (London: Penguin Books, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> See Introduction n24 for more on this debate concerning the propagandistic and triumphalist nature of Jesuit art.

push the visions of the allegorical figures representing the four corners of the world toward Ignatius in a show of global unity with Christ, it nevertheless remains true that the construction of this empire of souls was in its infancy. It was operating in an interconnected web of cooperation and equilibrium between the world major powers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While, by the late seventeenth century, early modern Catholicism was more of a global faith than any other religion, it had not positioned itself to conquer the world.

The Jesuits who traveled to the Ottoman Empire in the first century of the Society of Jesus undoubtedly saw themselves as agents of religious change, and were very much like the other heroic Jesuit missionaries of the sixteenth century, such as the martyrs Francis Xavier and Edmund Campion. And they were part of the Church's new methods of religious reform. Most of them were professional scholars and theologians; Eliano, in particular, had extensive training in Oriental languages that put him in the same class with some of the greatest Jesuit minds of his age, such as Robert Bellarmine and Athanasius Kircher.<sup>6</sup> They sought to evangelize to the Christian communities of the Ottoman Empire in an effort to further the spread of Catholicism under the aegis of an aggressive papacy that desired to save the souls of the world.

But their immersion in arguably the most confessionally diverse region of the globe meant that Catholicism was only one of many influential religious identities. The result was that the Jesuits who went to the Ottoman Empire to spread Catholicism were forced to engage in its defense. While most of the Jesuits discussed in this study (Eliano is an obvious exception) never deliberately nor overtly conveyed this as a self-defense, they nevertheless self-confessionalized by participating in the production and defense of early modern Catholicism. The Jesuits' recollections of their time in the Ottoman Empire provide vivid descriptions of how individuals

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<sup>6</sup> For works on Bellarmine and his intellectual life, cf. Peter Godman, *The Saint as Censor* and Stefania Tutino, *Empire of Souls*. For Kircher, cf. Paula Findlen, *Athanasius Kircher: The Last Man Who Knew Everything* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

(themselves and others) participated in confession-building. Their anxieties about themselves and their place within a world of multiple intersecting and overlapping faiths, influenced how they presented their Catholic identity and their willingness to risk their lives for it. These borders without time and the emphasis placed on them are central to understanding who the Jesuits were and who they believed themselves to be. They were preoccupied with placing themselves on the right side of these cultural landmarks that were defined by their own and by others' actions.

And this fixation came to the fore through their continual emphasis on their own religiosity. They developed an outward self-image that reflected the cultural features that placed them firmly on what they saw as the correct side of a confessional boundary; and part of this self-image was spreading the faith. The dichotomy between those who believed and those who did not that is inherent in missionary work demonstrates how religious identity was not simply the result of the quotidian vicissitudes of religious life. Episodes like Eliano's shipwreck near Cyprus or Giuseppe Pomo's continual request to be sent to Ethiopia were part of a series of impulses to define themselves and their place within early modern Catholicism. They show that, while individuals may have conformed to larger religious confessions, it was through their individual choices and actions that they self-confessionalized.

Most of the Jesuits examined in this study were not Jewish converts like Eliano, or even conversos; but they (along with the Christians, Muslims, and Jews whom they encountered) nevertheless faced the same problem of constructing a self-image that fit neatly within the exacting prescriptions of their respective religious identities. And the need to separate themselves from the many other religious identities of the early modern Ottoman Empire compounded their desires to self-confessionalize even further. Eliano, his peers, the Ottomans, the Jews, and the Christians whom the Jesuits sought to convert wanted to be known as staunch



adherents to their respective faiths. Just as Eliano had to reject the larger religious and cultural structures of Judaism and repeatedly demonstrate how he had embraced Catholicism, so too the other early modern Jesuits also wanted their religiosity to be the defining aspect of their lives. And the same went for those whom they attempted to evangelize, and those who either resisted or undercut the Jesuits' efforts. While the Jesuits believed that they were participating in securing the truth in their respective confessional identities, in reality the construction of a confessional identity hinged on many confessions undergoing this same process simultaneously and always in relation to one another. This resulted in the preservation of other confessions.

No place offered this confessional polyvalence quite like the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the Jesuits who served there unconsciously preoccupied themselves with cross-confessional proximity and the continual need to affirm their place within their own religious confession. They fashioned and defended their identities against a plurality of faiths. Individuals' efforts to define and defend confessional borders explain how the many parallel confessionalizations co-existed and how individuals navigated the poly-confessional early modern world.<sup>7</sup> Thus, at a very basic level, early modern confession- and empire-building centered on the unique historical, socio-cultural, situational, interpersonal, and phenomenological circumstances in which individuals found themselves, and how they reacted to them. And this equilibrium of confessional expansion hinged upon individuals' efforts to sustain it through their own confessional self-affirmation.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Cf., Randolph C. Head, "Catholics and Protestants in Graubünden: Confessional Discipline and Confessional Identities without an Early Modern State?," *German History* 17 (1999), 321-45; Daniela Hacke, "Church, Space and Conflict: Religious Co-Existence and Political Communication in Seventeenth-Century Switzerland," *German History* 25 (2007), 285-312; Benjamin Kaplan, "Fictions of Privacy: House Chapels and the Spatial Accommodation of Religious Dissent," *American Historical Review* 107/4 (2002), 1031-64; Keith P. Luria, "Separated by Death? Burials, Cemeteries, and Confessional Boundaries in Seventeenth-Century France," *French Historical Studies* 24 (2001), 185-222.

<sup>8</sup> Markus P. M. Vink, "Between Profit and Power: The Dutch East India Company and Institutional Early Modernities in the 'Age of Mercantilism,'" in *Between the Middle Ages and Modernity: Individual and Community*

Despite the Society of Jesus's desire to unify the world through Christ, early modern globalization never was the beginning of European dominance and was not marked by the hierarchical shades of imperialism. Rather, it was a period of balance between burgeoning empires. In the Ottoman Empire, the Jesuits operated under the Turks' political gaze and faced other localized problems, and gingerly carried forth their missionary objectives hoping not to raise the Ottomans' suspicions. When they failed in that regard, things went badly quickly. After all, Eliano wound up in an Ottoman prison and was only released after much diplomatic posturing on the part of the French and Venetians; and he found himself re-imprisoned in the 1580s.

While there is a level of hyperbole in the allegorical vision of early modern Catholicism as it is represented in *Imago primi saeculi*, Bernini's fountain, Pozzo's fresco, and countless other pieces of baroque art, the images nevertheless contain some kernel of truth. The early Jesuits did contribute to the formation of an early modern Catholicism that was promulgated through its art: it was a universal faith that unified individuals through their shared belief in Christ. But it never was a faith built on either papal soteriological absolutism or Catholic monarchs' desire to conquer the world. It was but one of many religious confessions that demonstrated the truly cosmopolitan nature of the early modern Ottoman Empire and the collaborative character of the early modern world. In the end, while the Jesuits' efforts to save souls may have set them apart from the everyday believer, the Jesuits were just like everyone else. The impulse to self-confessionalize was the individual's contribution to the larger processes of confessionalization and empire-building, both of which were part and parcel of early modern globalization.

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